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ABSTRACT

Life Lab, an alternative educational program stressing self-directed learning at Miami-Dade Community College, is discussed in terms of its development, impact, and student attributes. More than half of the document presents personal histories and opinions of students and staff, alternating with the views of Dr. MacGregor Smith, program founder. An appended document reports five studies covering a wide range of student attributes: (1) Self-Concept Study, Phase II, indicating a significant relationship between length of time in the program and an increase in self-awareness, as measured by the Distribution Score of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale; (2) Demographic Survey, with a 69.13% return rate, showing the typical student to be a middle-aged, white male, married and employed full-time; (3) Learning Style Study, with results from the Learning Style Inventory indicating student and program approaches are consistent; (4) Nowicki-Strickland Study, showing that the program's students do not differ significantly from other community college populations regarding range of locus of control; (5) Educational Attitudes Study, finding students' attitudes to be consistent with the programs in which they were enrolled. (LH)

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ON YOUR OWN – BUT NOT ALONE

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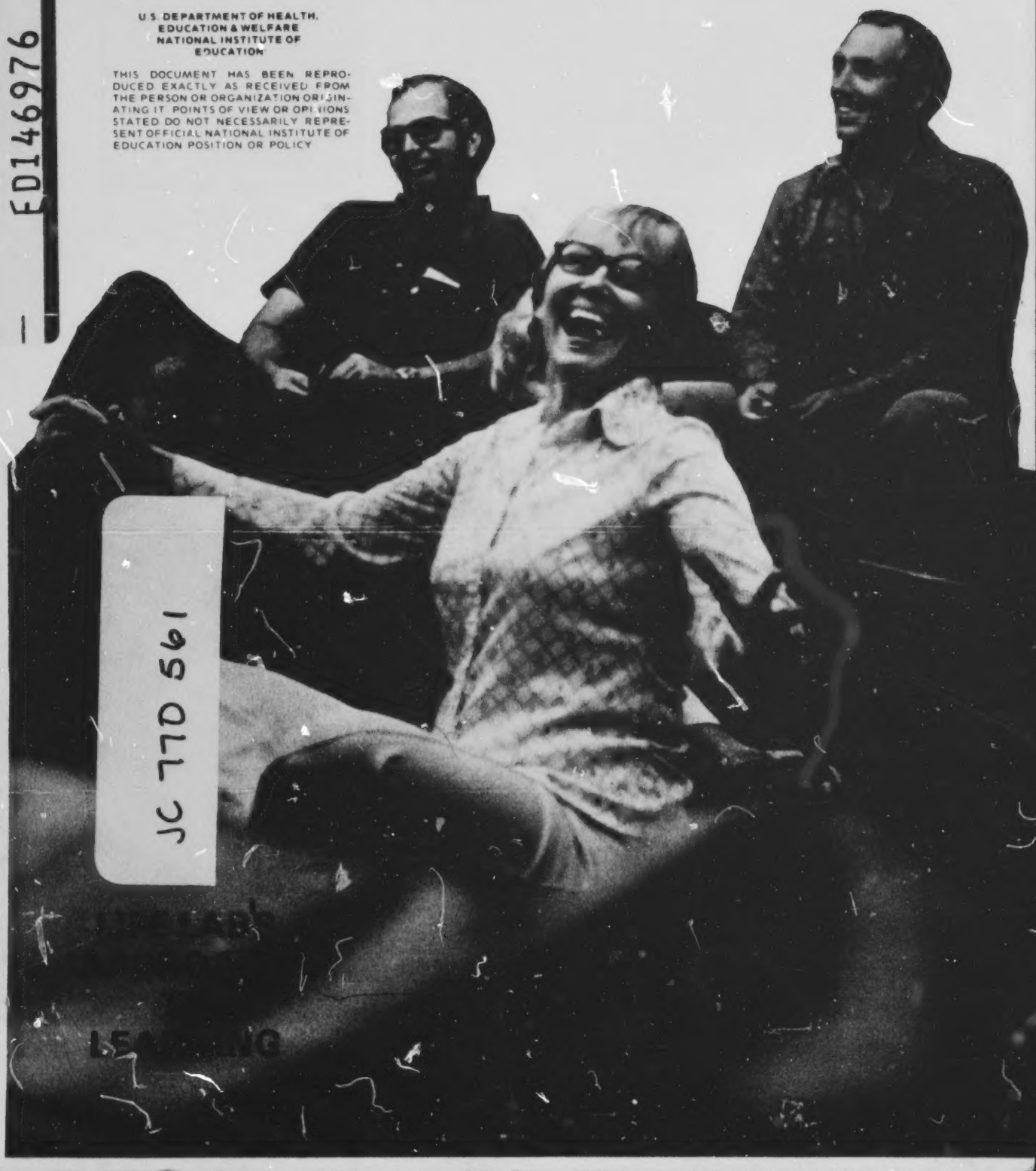

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On Your Own – But Not Alone

Life Lab's

Approach

to

Learning

1H O W T H I S

Each double page is numbered sequentially. Therefore every numbered page has a left hand side.

From Page 4 through Page 81 this side (the left) will be "Mac's View."

Both sides

the story of Life

will be telling

different points

"Mac" is Dr. McGregor Smith, Jr. He will be telling how Life Lab (which he started) began as an educational experiment at Miami-Dade Community College's Downtown Campus. He will tell how *he thinks* the experiment turned out, and also he'll share some of his "fantasies" for other educational experiments in the future.

BOOK WORKS 1

Each double page is numbered sequentially. Therefore every numbered page has a *right* hand side.

will be telling

Lab. Only, they

it from two

of view.

From page 4 through 81 this side (the right) will be "Our View."

"We" are the staff and students of Life Lab. Coordinating "Our View" are the two book editors, Pam Johnson and Nancy Ross, both former Life Lab students and now members of the staff. We will be telling how *we believe* the Life Lab experiment turned out. We also will be sharing our "fantasies" and feelings about Life Lab and education in general.

contents 2

LEFT SIDE

Page:

1 - How This Book Works
2 - Contents
3 - Credits

MAC'S VIEW:

4 - To Begin Form A Circle
6 - A Search for Roots
9 - New Experiences and Karma
13 - An Attempt to Unravel
17 - Chain of Trust
23 - Off the Crest of a Wave
26 - Publicity Focuses Light
33 - A New Me Journeys
41 - A Plan to Foil Demons
46 - The Conflagration
49 - Catharsis
50 - Introduction to Fantasies
65 - A Personal Learning Contract

82 - Concluding "Mac's View"
83 - The Linking Place
94 - Index

RIGHT SIDE:

Page:

1 - How This Book Works
2 - How To Use This Book
3 - Dedication

OUR VIEW:

4 - Out of Chaos - Beauty and Paradox
17 - Students Create Their World of Life Lab
57 - On Journal Keeping, a Study Plan and Student Sharing
71 - Out of Chaos - Creativity

82 - Concluding "Our View"
83 - The Linking Place
94 - Index - Order Form
95 - Evaluation Form
96 - Diane Ellison Art

2 how to use this book

This book, we believe, is as much like Life Lab as a reading experience could be. It is full of distractions. New paths may tempt you onto what seem like sidetracts, but which may become main themes for you.

As in Life Lab, the staff has not tried to eliminate these potential interruptions to your train of thought. Rather, we've tried to provide a plan that will make it easy to follow your own interests. Inevitably, some may feel totally lost, which is all right. We believe that in education and in life getting a little lost may be necessary in order to find yourself.

Our dilemma is always how to let the lostness happen, and yet provide an environment where students survive the frustration long enough to experience the confidence that comes from finding themselves and creating their own maps.

It is not easy to *let go* of students -- or of imagined readers, we now know.

There is a delicate balance achieved in a supportive learning environment that gives students the tools, the space and the trust to create maps for directing their own learning. It can easily become a sham freedom used to manipulate students into taking our own predetermined educational trip. Or it can be a cop out, a rationalization for doing almost nothing at all.

There are as many possible ways of using this book as there are potential readers. Following are a few of the possibilities that occur to us:

* Read Mac's View about Life Lab's history on the left side pages first. Then read on the right how it all really turned out from the viewpoint of staff and students.
* Read straight through like a regular book, totally mixing both sides and all views.
* Scan and read the pages where the art work attracts you most.
* Start with the photos in the Linking Place, and first read about those students and staff who look most interesting to you.
* Start with the index in the back and read subjects of most interest to you.
* Just dive in and *explore* forward and backward on both sides.
* However you do it, please share *your way* and *your opinions* with us by using the evaluation form at the end.

In Life Lab we are dependent on our students to tell us how well the program is working for them. Our sense of what to do next comes from the feedback. In this experimental publishing venture, we are dependent on responses from readers for a sense of direction.

That is why it is important to us for you to share what works and doesn't work for you in this book. We are including a *tool* for doing this on the last page. If you use it, you will become part of the *process in* Life Lab's evolution from what it is now to whatever it becomes next.

credits 3

HERB ROSS

SETH ROSS

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LORIE SMITH

3 dedication

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- The Miami-Dade administrators who provided a creative space where experimental "mutations" like Life Lab could occur - Doctor's Bill Stokes, Tom Fryer, Terry Kelly, Robert McCabe, and Peter Masiko, Jr.

- The director of the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education, Virginia Smith, whose calculated risks hopefully will encourage incalculable strides in the relevance of education, and our project officer Rene Cardenas.

- The Life Lab "Book Group" who met weekly to help create this document: Pam Johnson, Nancy Ross, Wallis Riley, Stephanie Sladon, Allen Skolnick, Diane Guminski, Kathleen Sexton, and Betty Kleinbaum.

- The man whose "calling" led to the beginning of this *book* - Dean Fred Shaw.

- The Union Graduate School "faculty" who contributed their own creativity to the Life Lab space - Stephen Max Corey, Roy Fairfield, Goodwin Watson, and Carol Zion.

- The Miami-Dade Community College Foundation - Dean Horace Traylor and Vera Sincavage.

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PART I

TO BEGIN, FORM A CIRCLE

Herman Rubin, manager of World Book Encyclopedia Sales Division in South Florida, heard about Life Lab from his wife, Evelyn. Evelyn heard about it when she chanced to meet Elyse Rapaport, an old friend, in a grocery store. Elyse was a student in Life Lab.

After 35 years as a school drop-out, Herman visited a Life Lab *circle meeting* at Miami-Dade Community College. He signed up as a freshman. So did Evelyn. They wrote on their "study contract" that their learning project would be to "humanize our business."

Together they introduced *circle meetings* to their district managers and more than 100 employees. Openness and sharing were encouraged. Herman abolished quotas for his sales staff. He stopped the highly competitive "motivational" techniques, which are the heart of most national sales programs.

"We decided instead of using people to build our business, we would use our business to build people," Herman explained.

By the time Herman and Evelyn were sophomores, they were an enigma at World Book. They had quit sending competitive reports to the home office in Chicago. Yet their sales reports, which they did send, showed an expanding business. Most divisions around the country were reporting an opposite trend.

"I think they honestly would have liked to fire us," Evelyn shared as she reported on their study project to other Life Lab students. "Only, how could they, with our business so good?"

All students weren't reporting such success stories. Freddie Bowe, a black migrant farm worker from the Bahamas, was trying to organize migrants as his project. He frequently invited other Life Lab students to accompany him to meetings in the Belle Glade farming area. His Journal and his reports at *circle meetings* introduced us to a lifestyle of unbelievable frustrations.

Yet, Freddie taught us a deeply moving lesson. He was never with us that he didn't evoke good humored laughter. He never left a meeting without a glow of optimism.

"Mon, I learned a good lesson," he'd conclude after describing another failure at trying to help a group of migrants organize themselves. "You better know, I'll be prepared to do better next time!"

Freddie did do better. But in a different field. He got a job directing a youth program in a ghetto district. Unexpectedly, Freddie would show up with a busload of hyperactive boys and girls. Grinning happily, he would insist they space themselves around our circle and listen quietly until their turn came.

In these *circle meetings* everyone had a turn. Everyone got listened to. Life Lab grew out of that primitive form of democracy. When circles got too big, they split amoeba-like and formed new circles. Whoever showed up joined in - students, staff, and visitors.

Life Lab discovered the path it was to follow by listening to students tell who they were and where they wanted to go. To really listen, many of us discovered, was the hardest discipline to learn. When I was authentically attentive, I discovered I could learn from every person around me. But the most important lessons I often learned were about myself - how my impatience and my anxiety to say my piece, to compete for attention often clogged my awareness.

Many of us learned a kind of patience that paid off in amazing ways. Not just in Life Lab, but in our lives. Not just in the lives of students, but in the lives of staff, as well. We learned that for us teaching was more an art than a science. It was an art that had more to do with listening than telling, more with expectations than testing, more with how we relate than what we know.

Life Lab students introduced me to Baba Ram Dass (Dr. Richard Alpert, ex-Harvard psychologist turned Eastern mystic.) I learned from Ram Dass that my most important goal as a

4 our view

GETTING BORN

by Nancy Ross

On the heels of my 30th birthday, having experienced puberty, adolescence, physical maturity, marriage, motherhood, the humanistic movement, pain, joy, fear, and other signs of being alive, (though not in that order necessarily), I arrived at Life Lab.

The community's home was the upstairs room of a small two story building doubling for classroom space while the new Miami-Dade Community College was being planned. It was partitioned by four reprint-piled standing shelves, and the only "real" pieces of furniture were the desks being used by the secretary (soon to be student) in front of the partition, and the audio tape department workers (soon to be students) in back of the partition.

In this extraordinary room many things of an extraordinary nature took place for me as well as the other 50 students attending at that time. In that area we had our community meetings, workshops, seminars, small group activities, meditation sessions, exhibitions, lectures, previews of films and audio tapes, regularly scheduled daily course related films and tapes and also discussion groups. There were always mailboxes being emptied and filled, links and messages and announcements being placed and replaced on our one class-room-sized bulletin board, audio tapes being requested, reproduced mechanically, and returned, incoming and outgoing phone calls, mimeographing, typewriters busily typing newly created ideas, memo's, and forms, and a constant stream of questions, clarifications and answers crossing one over the other miraculously making their proper contacts. Tight bundles of programmers and students in corners, on open floor spaces, or against boxes of books and magazines which doubled for a lending and swapping library, heads touching, knees meeting, intently attending to each other, oblivious to surrounding activities. Bushels of apples or tomatoes or mangos

from somebody's back yard or uncle appeared magically and periodically. During large meetings and workshops, the staircase and small patio below became our overflow area, where people who initially fit into the room and experienced the program, periodically shifted outside to make space for those who could not. And when the video equipment was present filming, the silence was amazing. Husbands, wives, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and friends of students came and shared, and eventually became students themselves, or community resources, or staff, or just simply "friends of Life Lab," attending meetings, helping on projects or bringing fresh cakes and breads. In those days the children of students slept, curled between other students and bean bags, lulled to sleep by the curious comfort of warm sounds and feelings. Others were busily at work at projects set out for them by friendly faces without names, whoever happened to be close and interested. Infants could be found sleepily suckling from mothers watching the film scheduled for that day at that time, and still others could be found in random arms gently cradled. As if we could not get enough of each other, of the

teacher was to *be* myself, to continually *work on myself*. If I could be such a perpetual learner, then others around me might learn too, in a natural way, by trusting to *be* themselves, to be the natural learners we all are until events in our lives turn off our desire to learn, to be creative, to invent, to discover.

One of those events, apparently, in the lives of some was an event called school. Terrible irony. Before students put me on the road to Life Lab, I did not fully believe this. I had read the criticisms of the education industry by Ivan Illich, Paul Goodman, George Leonard, Carl Rogers, and many others. I confess I didn't learn much from these prophets. The persons who taught me were Herman and Evelyn, Elyse, Freddie and the many students and colleagues who have shared their lives with me over the past few years.

I feel my education began when I came back to school as a teacher at age 41. It was Dr. Herb Ross, a chiropractor and volunteer staff member of Life Lab, who helped me understand how often institutions end up perpetuating the very things they were established to eradicate. Institutionalized medicine can create more sickness than it cures. In the same symbiotic way, institutionalized education can create ignorance, religions can create rejection of spirituality, prisons can create criminals, politics can create corruption, marriage can create divorce. It was as though, in Herb's words, "the problem and the cure need each other to exist."

Early in Life Lab's history we began a struggle to avoid falling into this institutional trap. Our goal was to be **congruent**, to exemplify our philosophy, to do what we said we were here to do. Herman and Evelyn summed it up better in their study plan to humanize their business. Like them, we hoped to use Life Lab to build people, instead of using people to build one more layer in the educational bureaucracy.

Herman, Evelyn, Elyse, and Freddie were four in a circle of several thousand students who now have been part of Life Lab. My job in the pages on this side of this book is to go back to the roots of that circle.

In tracing the roots of Life Lab to their beginnings, I will try to share with you:

1. The serendipity and the trust that allowed it to develop in what Richard Cornuelle, author of *De-Managing America The Final Revolution*, would call "random and unpredictable ways" as a "natural mutation."

2. The philosophical concepts that emerged and were tested by students and staff working together as colleagues.

3. The evolution of management systems that grew stronger after each collapse.

4. The lessons I have learned and the promise I think the Life Lab experience holds.

5. The unfinished work, the exciting possibilities that still lie ahead.

feeling, we met at each other's homes, on docks, boats, in parks, watched sunrises, sunsets, attended concerts, movies, clean up rallies, picnics, had poetry readings at midnight, philosophical discussions over Cuban coffee and fruit at dawn, and had meditation sessions on the beach. We shared and cared and reproduced our energy by spending it. Our anger and fears and expectations were invited to be expressed, our tears ran free, our joys leapt and bounded and unselfconsciously sounded in the strangest places one could imagine.

I can remember our move to our next-to-final home, the 10th floor of the old Chamber of Commerce building, where we were fortunate enough to acquire 4 rooms, each half the size of our previous one. We were grateful and extremely busy carrying on our activities in our new quarters. And at last we moved into the new building. We were housed initially in a quarter of the fourth floor and eventually we moved to the sixth floor where it became clear that our needs warranted a full third of the floor. The building was beautiful and impressive and as modern as both our North and South Campus, Miami-Dade Community College, Downtown Campus, had arrived!! Each program-advisor had their very own desk, and the maximum in any room was three! There were small meeting rooms, and large group meeting rooms, and private meeting rooms and a gloriously large auditorium. We had two enormous walls for mail boxes and an entire room for the mimeograph equipment. We had 6 large long walls on which to hang our links, messages and announcements and artwork, and all of the walls in the meeting rooms and advisor offices. We had a whole room for reprints and as many shelves and walls and table tops as we needed for the overflow. We had a beautiful library and outdoor patio, and ping pong room, and bookstore, and smart looking furniture to boot!!! Life Lab, located in Miami-Dade Community College, had also arrived! We needed a new system, we had grown so large; we needed proper labels so we could identify ourselves; we needed new goals, for we had grown so quickly; and we needed new scales and measures, for future shock was upon us.

That month, even though I was very busy, I felt very lost, kind of strange, proud as a peacock, somehow empty, but very happy. Something seemed missing, and it was a while before I figured it out. It was the past; that closely quartered, closely knit, closely held past, and the beginnings of an intense and long labor, (home delivery, of course). It was a time when all who cared and shared and needed and gave, came to be with each other for the miracle of the birthing of a hallowed space, where a growing changing humanity might educate itself, about itself, by itself.

I can remember Mac telling me one evening at a group dinner that "It isn't all that inconceivable, Nancy, that we could be blinded by our own enthusiasm." I nodded, trying to comprehend and digest his somber voice and thoughtful gaze. "Well," he said, "if this particular concept works, we'll learn from it, and if it doesn't--we'll have the opportunity to possibly learn even more." I swallowed hard and felt a chill run slowly through my body. A silence--nothing--for ages. He started into the whirling air--then said, "I just hope I'll be able to know when it's working and when its not."

Well -- there were/are times when it did and it does. [*grin.*]
And -- there were/are times when it didn't and doesn't. [*grit.*]
So -- we keep on trying -- [*grit*].
And -- we keep on learning -- [*grin. grit. grin. grit. grin.*]

I hung around for the birthing celebration as a student and advisor and I'm still hanging around. It's a long labor. Caring, sharing, changing, hurting, growing, stretching, failing, reaching, learning, and still celebrating! The getting born.

We're all still getting born.

Nancy

Part 2

A SEARCH FOR ROOTS LEADS TO A "FATAL DISCONNECTION" WITH LIFE

The history of Life Lab appears so different to me, depending on whether I view it backward or forward in time. Looking back, it seems to have flowed with a kind of inevitability. One development flowed logically from another, creating the historical *myth* out of which we try to make sense from our past. But when I focus on what it was really like, as we went forward from any one point in that history, Life Lab's development seems to be a miracle of unlikely coincidences.

In an unplanned way, this book is going through the same kind of developmental process. None of us on the team of students and staff working together to write it is sure exactly what final form it will take. Our goal for the book is that it be *congruent*—that it communicate the actuality of Life Lab and how it came to be.

For me, its earliest roots can be traced to a meeting some nine years ago with Dean Fred Shaw at Miami-Dade Community College. Until then my career had been in the field of professional journalism. Fred, who moonlighted as book editor for the *Miami Herald*, invited me to start a journalism department for a new campus the college was building.

At first, I turned down his offer, explaining that neither my bachelor's nor master's degree included a single course in education. I felt I knew nothing about teaching.

Fred's eyes twinkled, and he grunted, "That's the biggest asset you've got. Exactly why I want you."

I thought Fred was being nice about an obvious deficiency, but in reality, one root of Life Lab started there. Another root took hold when I attended a new faculty orientation. Dr. Mildred Bain talked about the importance of education having real meaning in the lives of students. I listened enthusiastically, anxious to begin contributing meaning to students' lives.

I asked Mildred to recommend an up-to-date book about her philosophy of education. She recommended Alfred North Whitehead's *The Aims of Education*. When I opened my 60-cent paperback copy, I discovered the book was first printed in 1929. My underlined copy still is, for me, the best up-to-date book on education I've read.

Whitehead wrote about what he called the "fatal disconnection" between a school's curriculum and real life.

I experienced first hand this "fatal disconnection" when I began teaching English classes, in addition to journalism. Two courses in English were required waystops on every student's struggle for a degree. I found how tough it was to "connect" with students who attended only to meet requirements, get a grade, and return to the "real world" as soon as possible.

I began to study the faces of my students and those in other classrooms. Here and there was aliveness and vitality. But often students' expressions were lifeless. Our amputation of English, social science, humanities, and other required subjects from real life had left deadly dull branches of academia lying in the path students must follow to get a degree.

Much of my teaching experience seemed to confirm Herb Ross's claim that educational institutions can create more ignorance than love for learning. The "fatal disconnection" Whitehead wrote about arose when classrooms were isolated from students' reality. When we called these classes education, we began innoculating students against ever catching any real desire for education.

At that time, Miami-Dade, like most colleges, required departmental exams in general education courses required for graduation. As a faculty member, I was required to monitor social science exams given in an auditorium to hundreds of students.

My job was to keep one section of students from cheating. The ordeal of the exam seemed to challenge the students' ingenuity to circumvent what appeared to many as an "initiation rite"

6 our view

PAM JOHNSON

My experience with Life Lab? I've loved it, hated it, believed in it, given up on it. I've called it idealistic and beautiful. I've called it naive and mundane. What meaning can I make of these contradictions?

Let me go back three years, to the day I came to Life Lab to "enquire" about the program. I was forty years old, just divorced, emerging from lifelong habits of hesitance and reserve. I'd had a brush with the job market where my high school diploma wasn't impressing anyone. Too spineless to fight for a good job, but reluctant to take a mechanical one, I hedged. I'd "try" school till my money or my morale ran out.

Life Lab appealed to me because I'd always like independent study. I liked what I'd heard of its philosophy - that you could design your own courses, starting "where you where" - and that responsibility for learning rested with the student.

Weekly circle meetings were an important part of that first term experience for me. I went through overcoming shyness in speaking out about feeling responses, and learned to "actively" listen to others.

One circle might hold a black activist, a conservative housewife, a schizophrenic artist, an executive secretary, a former priest, a computer programmer, a drug rehab parolee, a police detective. This diversity, in a setting emphasizing openness and acceptance, made for some heavy emotional experiences.

Perhaps the parolee was hearing a policeman's feelings for the first time; the activist was beginning to see - if not agree with - the rationale of the conservative housewife. We learned to accept each other as human beings, and if hostilities arose, we accepted them too in the sense of facing them for what they were, not trying to cover up.

Then there was the academic experience - for me, pure heaven. I could start with my own interests and pursue them however I wanted. One of my loves was music. At last I had the time and an excuse to begin to learn the language of 20th century composers, and I did some composing myself.

Another pleasure in self-directed study - I could contract to go in one direction, renegotiate, and go in another if something intrigued me. In math - where I was floundering - I found the history and philosophy of math. Though not able to **do** much with figures, I did gain concepts **about** them, and what's more enjoyed the process.

I earned an AA degree, became an intern in the program, then a program-advisor. Now I look at Life Lab from "the other side."

I hassle over ethics. In what ways should the student's idea that he's learned something coincide with college standards? In an open college, can academically untalented students be expected to define their own courses? If not, should they be "oriented in" or "screened out" (or are both these notions antithetical to the program)?

Even with talented students, are they seeing more than their own prejudices in what they read and experience? In discussion groups are they just trading opinion, sometimes ignorance?

And what about the dangers of offering unbounded possibilities? Sooner or later we all find realistic limits. How often do these limits "feel like" failure after reaching for the stars?

Most devastating of all is the recurring fear that a program putting the student at the center of the learning experience hits a point of diminishing returns. Self-centered learning ("What does biology mean to **me**?") may be just that, in old fashioned terms. Processing for "the meaning to me and my life" may keep the student from integrating what he knows and cares about into larger patterns of meaning, surely one of the desirable hallmarks of an educated person.

that in no way contributed to the real lives of anyone; at least, not to the lives of students. To the lives of teachers, like me, it contributed at least one thing - assurance of a livelihood. As long as students had to take the exams in order to get credentials they needed to get work in the real world, the jobs of teachers were secure.

I watched rows of students mulling pages of questions, marking soft lead lines between dotted columns on computer cards. These pencil marks would, in one electrical impulse, signal right or wrong, labeling each student a winner or a loser.

It didn't matter to the computer whether the student had studied hard, made good guesses, or cheated. What mattered was lead marks being in columns where they were supposed to be. Self-consciously, I thought every student knew this. For some of them, I thought I must be the last barrier to winning, because for the entire hour I never took my eyes off them. Like the computer that would grade the exams, I was mechanically doing my job. I was stopping them from cheating.

When I collected the exams from my students, I kept one. That night I took it myself. I had no answer key, so I never knew what my score would have been. But I was convinced that without making good guesses or cheating, I could not pass it. I asked six other faculty members, not in the social science department, if they thought they could pass it. None thought they could.

Next, I went back to see Dean Fred Shaw again. I told him I thought it might be best for me to resign. I had concluded, I explained, that much of what went on in education, including most exams, did not contribute to the real lives of students.

Fred cancelled another appointment and took me to lunch at the *Flame* that day. I remember his hulking body silhouetted in the dim light. He thumped the table with his fist, making the candle flicker as we talked. Fred was the best story teller I have known. He spent the afternoon telling stories about students whose lives had been changed in wonderful ways at the college I was ready to quit.

He told me departmental exams were on the way out. If I wanted to be part of changing education for the better, he declared, I was already working at the best place to do it. Fred then urged me to begin work on a Ph.D. in Education. Surprised, I asked him about his earlier remark that my not having had courses in education was an asset.

"I meant that then," he said. "But by now they couldn't do you much harm. We've talked about changes we'd both like to see made in education. To make changes, you'll have to have the tools of your trade. And that includes a Ph.D."

Fred, who died a few years later, knew how to use the tools of his trade. He considered teaching a calling, which in his language, was merely a high-level trade, maybe the highest, but still a trade, like plumbing and wiring, doctoring and lawyering, secretarying and all the other ways mankind and womankind had for making an honest living.

The afternoon we ate and talked at the *Flame*, Fred interested me in two new projects. One was a team to evaluate a training program for Teacher Aides conducted by the University of Miami and Miami-Dade. The other was a Task Force to explore alternative educational programs.

In both projects I found myself working with Dr. Stephen M. (Max) Corey from the University of Miami Graduate School. It was Max who showed me how to make the ideas of Whitehead came alive and the next root of Life Lab began to grow.

Max was a retired Dean of Teacher's College, Columbia University. He had written a book on "Action Research" and many other publications, and he had been involved in a national projected sponsored by the old Progressive Education Association called "The Eight Year Study." His credentials were many and his illusions were few. One illusion Max certainly did not have was that education was something that happened to students from the outside. While outside conditions can be more or less favorable, the essential processes of learning are internal ones.

Max started me thinking of *processing* as the critical ingredient in every learning experience. *Processing* is what turns a learning experience into a new awareness, a new un-

7 our view

I wonder how many students are aware, when they leave Life Lab, that there is a wider view of the value of knowledge than that directly related to their own lives? That this is what learning implies? That there's more to know then they **can** know? More to know than they can dream of?

All this is not to say that people don't learn in Life Lab. They do. (I did.) But it seems our students are more successful with affective learning. This may be the most pertinent learning in our emotionally shallow century. But I often wish we could be more candid about what we deliver - a special Life Lab brand of education that blends inner and outer experience, varying with each person. I wish we didn't have to mesh with the traditional system, giving grades in specific courses for credit, and so on.

But how many students would we lose if Life Lab weren't part of a traditional accrediting institution?

I know. It's easy to define problems, not so easy to find solutions. Then let me end on a positive note. Life Lab **is** providing interesting and individual educational experiences in a flexible time-space frame. Administratively, the program has done an amazing job of responding quickly and effectively to a burgeoning student population (Two to nine hundred in five years) and changing student demands (for supervised seminars to satisfy VA requirements, more emphasis on basic skills, less strong desire to experiment and create in learning and documentation, need for night peer groups and advising, etc.).

I don't doubt that it will mutate again in response to the number and kinds of students who come next. Its adaptability may be its most astounding quality in terms of its significance to educators.

In the last analysis, this adaptability based on a philosophy of "allowing" things to happen has meant the most to me, both as student and staff. It lends a sense of excitement. Things can and do change without unpleasant tension. There's no "big deal" about conferring titles, varying routines, trying new systems. Nothing is final. Another change is always around the corner.

This reflected in our first meeting about this book. Nancy and I found ourselves called editors. Kathleen and Diane were dubbed photographers. Others became contributors in various ways. And we knew titles and responsibilities might change at the next book meeting if circumstances warranted it. I had the feeling that whatever was important would evolve, and what wasn't would fall by the wayside, and that was all right, and we were all right, and the book would be all right!

Some call it Life Lab's "serendipity" factor, and we love it.

Yes, whatever Life Lab is (and I realize I haven't described it yet), I've loved it, hated it, believed in it, given up on it, and now, perhaps, I see a meaning in the contradictions. Are they two sides of the same coin? To have the idealistic, beautiful qualities, does Life Lab have to have the naive, mundance qualities as well?

I like to think there's a third possibility - of opposites not uniting each other but uniting. This "transcendance" theory has a lot of resonance for me. I carry it around like a diamond in my pocket. I don't know what to do with it. It doesn't belong to me. I can't give it away or use it. For now, I just know it's there, a treasure in the darkness.

appropriate ways. Sometimes the terms *experiential learning* and *process learning* are used interchangeably. Experience alone is not enough. Unless experiences are *processed* (put into a context, understood in relationship to other experiences, made sense of) we may learn nothing from them.

To a large degree, my part in producing this book is an exercise in *processing*. I am attempting to make sense out of my Life Lab experiences in such a way I can communicate what I have learned to others.

Max facilitated the learning process by perhaps the hardest thing for a teacher to do - by *active listening*. He taught three graduate education courses, and I took all three. For awhile, I ate lunch, once a week with Max and his wife Elinor at their home in South Miami. When I was accepted as a Ph.D. candidate in the Union Graduate School, he became my major Faculty Advisor.

In all my time with Max, I never heard him lecture more than 15 or 20 minutes at one time. If we had made a talk chart of our informal conversations (a thing he liked for us to do occasionally in his classes), I am sure it would have shown I talked much more than he did when we were together. After my first lunch visit, I left embarrassed because I had talked so much.

On my next visit, I apologized for being so talkative, and I told Max this time I wanted to listen to him. Max's brown eyes brightened in his tanned, guant face. His lips drew into an impish grin, and his voice had a crisp, undertone of delight as he called to Elinor who setting a table in the Florida Room.

"Hey, El, Mac says all he's going to do today is listen. He doesn't want to talk."

El chuckled loudly and shouted back, "I bet."

She walked briskly out to give me a hug, and she added:

"Don't worry, Mac. We like to hear what you're thinking about. Max looks forward to it."

That was an exciting *"Ah, ha"* learning experience for me, when El said, "Max looks forward to it." The tap root of Life Lab, I believe, began to grow here.

Of course, Max did look forward to what his students would have to say. That was basic in his magic as a teacher. He cared. There was nothing indulgent or polite about his listening, or about his questions, or his sparse comments, or his occasional enthusiastic anecdotes. He was involved in my learning process, and enjoying it.

As we became closer, he shared that education was fun for him, but often very frustrating too. I grew to recognize the lines in his face, the weariness that could creep into his eyes and voice. This was important learning for me too. I shouldn't believe that *process learning* was a panacea, an easier way.

8 our view

JUNE GREEN

The first meeting with Ms. Watkins whet my appetite about Life lab. I'd heard about it from a friend with whom I'd shared my concerns about my own self identity and my feeling that some formal education situation would help me gain some self respect. My friend knew of people who had been involved in Life Lab and showed such tremendous changes in their own attitudes that she felt there had to be something remarkable going on there.

We met in a small group at which Ms. Watkins explained, in general terms, some of the ideas behind the Life Lab philosophy of learning. The mix of individuals in the group evoked a curious response in me. These were people of many ages and backgrounds. A number of them were law officers, or fire fighting personnel...and I was eager to learn if they were there because of advantages to be gained from their department, or from the VA, or if they too, were "seeking" something "better," something challenging and different from themselves. I don't know for sure why I felt this was of interest to me. I guess it was partly because of a stereo type classification I had about civil service type people, and my very little personal exposure to those people in my own social and business experiences. I was to learn, as we went through the semester, that individuals are just that, and cannot be categorized by occupation or current status. As a matter of fact, probably one of the greatest lessons I've learned from Life Lab is that people are themselves first...and incidentally, reflect the habits of their jobs, or station in life. For me, this was a new idea, since my world reflected one of judgement by role...a convenient, but invalid idea to base personal interaction upon.

But back to that first meeting...I came away uneasy...so many questions. So much seemed vague. But I wanted to know more. I felt there was something important going on.

Since many who read this will be well into Life Lab concepts by the time they do, the significance of the fact that I used the word "share" in my opening paragraph, may go unnoticed. It's such an important, integral part of the philosophy here. However to me, at my first Peer Group with Kim Potter, he said he was "sharing" his experiences with us. The word "Share" lit up in bright lights within my brain and generated significant new ideas within me. It's such a beautiful idea, to share. So many times in my life I've wanted to "tell" people things about me and my ideas, and hesitated to impose myself upon them. I felt people might be bored, or might laugh, or not care. But with the idea of sharing, everything gained a new perspective. It was now possible to think people might really like to hear what I had to say, and share ideas with me as I shared with them. Share is such an unselfish word. And it has helped me to open up both within my Life Lab experiences and my personal encounters.

That was an important "first" insight created through my Life Lab experiences. Getting into my studies was complicated by the difficulty of separating the items into specified notebook designations. I said "specified"...I should have said, "suggested." For nothing...or very little anyway....is specified in Life Lab. Beyond a very general contract, you're on your own. And this is where the confusion comes in. Having known only disciplined school situations, where you're told exactly what is expected of you, I strugged with methods of organizing what I was doing, making it meaningful and complete enough to fit what I felt was a standard of college type work, keeping in mind interdisciplinary attitudes, and yet separating them enough to make it clear that I was covering subject matter represented by the competency book provided by Life Lab. This confusion caused me to re-organize my notebook regularly....and I believe it was a very valid instigator toward my understanding of what I was learning.

Life Lab has helped me become much more aware of my surroundings. For instance, even in social groups, in family discussions, there is a part of me that is "noticing" what is going on while it is going on. I've become aware of the interactions---the games we all play with each other...the influence peddling we participate in with each other...the impositions we place on each other...the advantage we take. I say we...it seems most people I meet participate in some

PART 3

NEW EXPERIENCES & THE KARMA OF FIVE PEOPLE COME TOGETHER IN THE BIRTH OF LIFE LAB

The philosophic fabric and the practical technology of Life Lab had their roots in my own educational experiences at this time. Over the course of two summers and assorted three-day weekends strungout between, I experienced:

- The hammer and tongs encounter techniques of a three-day Esalen Workshop designed to help participants break out of the social roles they normally played.
- The richness, but also the elusiveness of taking part in a *Leaderless Group* Workshop set up by Jack Gibb, and also the insights Jack shared about the self-directed potential of groups.
- The jive and sudden shive in the guts of a Price Cobbs' Black-White, Inter-Racial Encounter Weekend.
- The feeling of highly structured independence in a Betty Barzon Encounter Group following the directions of a tape recorder, yet doing our own thing.
- The tightly knit expansiveness of a Boston University Human Relations Summer Graduate Program conducted by Wendy Wyatt, Max Birnbaum and Ken Benne in the remote and stately mansion of Osgood Hills.
- The spiritual intellectualism of Joe Matthew's Ecumenical Institute Summer Presidium in an ancient, abandoned, un-airconditioned seminary in Chicago's sweltering West Side.
- The community of mutual caring shown in *circle meetings* at Jerry Mandina's *New Community School*.
- The Association for Humanistic Psychology's Annual Meeting where I joined a *new frontier* called the "Education Network," and where *old venerables* like Carl Rogers, Rollo May, and Baba Ram Dass wisely reminded us there was nothing *new*, but to continually look at everything old through *new eyes*.
- The Union Graduate School's Denver Colloquium overshadowed by snowcapped mountains and undergirded by the energy of 35 students and staff brought together by the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities to pioneer a new graduate program.

****

At the Union Colloquium I proposed to design two self-directed courses at Miami-Dade as a project for my Ph.D. degree. These courses, Human Relations and American Education in Transition, would be given to *leaderless groups* of eight to 12 students meeting off campus. One of the six experimental groups set up for this Union project would provide the fertile soil Life Lab needed to grow.

To understand an organization, it is helpful to understand a sense of the *karma* of the persons who were in on its start. Life Lab, before it was Life Lab, was touched by Fred Sh[illegible], Mildred Bain and Max Corey. Others whose touch was important at this early stage were Goodwin Watson and Roy Fairfield, both on the Union Graduate School staff; Tom Fryer,

of these "unequal" activities some of the time. Even as I learn about them I know I am still a perpetrator of some of them...and when I am, I now know I am acting apart from, rather than in contact with, the other person. I feel this is a very valid learning behavior I've obtained...and most of it has come through our values clarifications seminars. Another awareness I've seen growing in me, is of my environment. I'm more alert to the inputs it gives me. Besides observing the natural environment more particularly, which is interesting and exciting and discouraging at times, the man-made environment has begun to reveal it's real impact on me. For instance, our very first group meeting, after the initial interview type meeting, was a cluster situation of all new students and advisors. In the Life Lab living room, the staff had gathered a vast variety of electronic media equipment. The lighting in the room was erratic, flashing lights, darkness, brightness. There were cassette players, TV sets, Video cassets, films, sound tracks....a general bombardment of noise and sight being sent out at us by man-made machinery. The result of this impact, at the time, was not fully understood by me, but it told me, there's lots of ways to feed your mind...the problem may be selecting how much of which is suitable for you...the challenge is to make that decision and neither be too limiting nor too diverse so as to drown in the confusion of it all. And it said to me, also, "Wow!!!!! This is certainly a most unorthodox place. What next?"

I brought all the above up to show how it nudged my awareness to life. I was reading back through my personal journal and noted a November entry reacting to the impact of media forms on my life and listed those experienced during the course of that day, TV, car radio, film at LL, stage show at Gusman Hall, film back at Life Lab on TA, then TV cassette at Math lab, food dispensing machines, types at library....plus of course, books and conversations, escalators, elevators....so much and I was noticing them all .

Life Lab has had a powerful impact on my personal life. At first it was a challenge to those closest to me. I was new in the strength of my new ideas. I was being assertive in ways they'd never experienced. My enthusiasms colored my judgement and I did overwhelm and distress a number of people in my life, and specifically my husband. But mostly because we cared, and muchly because I was learning and cared about myself and my ideas now too, we were able to discuss....sometimes with great distress....sometimes with great joy.....what was happening to us because of me. The best facilitator in all these discussions was my knowledge that change was good and important to me....and a better me would be good for us.....and that even if we felt distress at the moment....the next moment could have something else for us....so there was no disaster in bad feelings. They were just one rung in a ladder of feelings we'd experience. And the ladder would hold up so long as we cared for it to. That's such a big realization for me!

It told me that even if I felt down -- there was an "up" close by.

In fact...I've written a sort of prose, poem about this...which follows. I believe it sums up the effect of my learning experience at Life Lab, as far as the deeply personal growth I've made. Oh, one important thing I've forgotten to mention. When I first entered LL, my insecurities about it bothered me, even to the fact as whether I belonged here. I sought out Esther and discussed this with her. She made me feel so welcome, and when we closed our meeting, she stood up and hugged. This was such a big thing for me. I was unused to showing my feeling to people...strangers or friends, and here she not only took the time to talk with me, but felt it was ok to reassure me with a hug. That action was quickly added to my goals for my own feeling and behavior response to people. I'm still working on this, but it gets easier and easier.

And through it all, through this semester of personal insights, I read, and listened to tapes, and went to seminars and gleaned vast amounts of information from which to draw for continued learning and growth.

then Vice President in charge of Miami-Dade's Downtown Campus; and the first two students for whom Tom created a new *study possibility* that grew into Life Lab. These students were Esther Colliflower and Lil Williams.

GOODWIN WATSON was the patriarch of the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities and the Union Graduate School. He not so gently taught us the fine art of *U.S.O.* [*Understanding Self and Others*]. His white goatee seemed to bob exclamation marks of authority even to his most casual remarks. In his 80's, Goodwin sometimes talked about retiring and moving with his beautiful, young wife, Dorie, to a farm in California. Years earlier, he was a professor in Teacher's College when Max Corey was Dean. I felt sure Max's letter of recommendation to Goodwin elicited the warm welcome I received at the Colloquium. I had brought together a bit of the *karma* of the two men again.

ROY FAIRFIELD, the Union Graduate School Coordinator, had literally worked his way through his Harvard Ph.D. with his hands. Impatient with higher education's irrelevancies, he specialized in what he called educational "crap detection." When not busy detecting same in our Ph.D. proposals, he wrote poetry in the form of haiku. His life was a hyperexpansive shuttle by jet and car to and from meetings. As my Core Faculty representative, he added me to his shuttle. Roy supposedly relaxed one week when we met for a "blue sky" vacation in a wooded retreat in North Florida. We held meetings in a canoe and while hiking in the woods. Roy also plugged in his electric typewriter and wrote two chapters for a book in between writing haiku. A few of his haiku follow:

Flow silently down
Spring-fed runs soaking in sun
Wilderness healing.

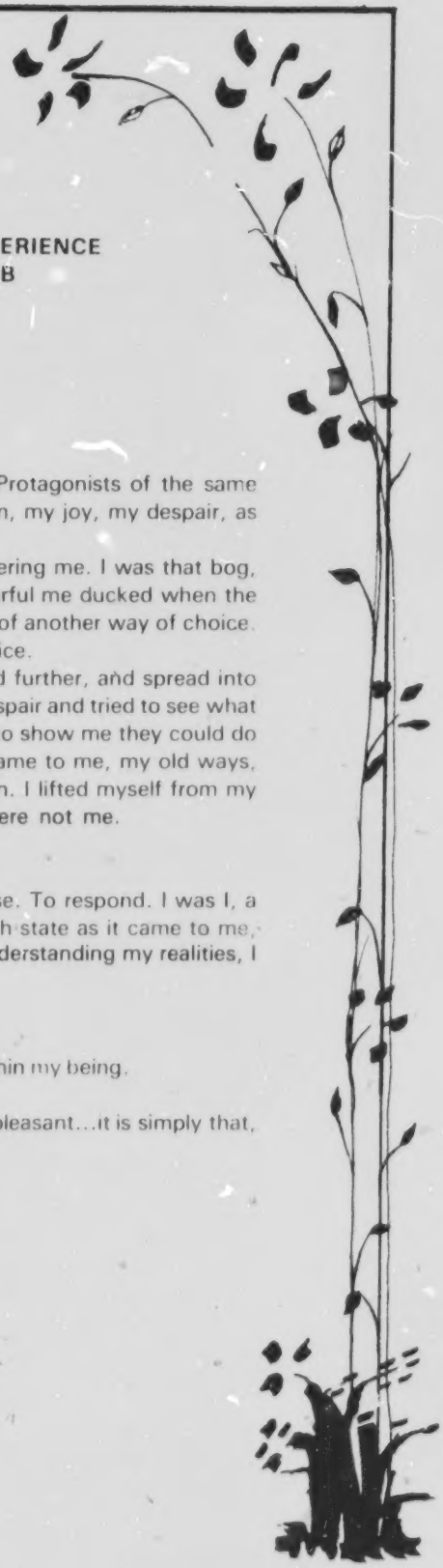
Deep purple oak leaves
Facing winter sun with quick
Roots to tomorrow.

Dried cow dung piled high
In vast pastures celebrate
An old Ph.D.!

Roy's *karma* also is a strong part of the Life Lab legacy.

TOM FRYER was the young *Berkeley-trained* Miami-Dade Vice President assigned to develop a new Downtown Campus. In the goal-oriented rhetoric of the day, Tom was "responsive to the needs of the community." With a wink and engaging grin, he could switch from one wave length to another and communicate with all diverse factions needing responding to. Like Roy, he had a sixth sense for detecting crap, only he called it *bullshit*. Tom had gotten his Ph.D. at the University of California at the height of the free speech movement in Berkeley. He was willing to risk long shots, but only if he got *good vibes* from the person responsible for pulling off the long shot. Whatever seemed impossible challenged him with an hypnotic lure. Eventually, the seemingly impossible job of chancellor of the impossibly diverse Peralta Community College District lured him back to California. Before he left, his *karma* was firmly fixed in Life Lab. He had personally given it space and allowed its momentum to grow.

LIL WILLIAMS was a black lady whose aliveness rang truth to the then often-shouted slogan, "black is beautiful." Her hair fringes tinted red, Lil could recite slogans with the best, but she excelled in living them. She had committed herself to making a success of an integrated Presbyterian Mission called New Covenant Church. Lil, like Tom, could use the appropriate language most likely to be heard. She joined one of the first self-directed groups in a Human



A PROSE POEM--A PERSONAL GROWTH EXPERIENCE SET INTO MOTION THROUGH LIFE LAB

I was despair
Now, 'I experience' despair....and joy.
Both expand me. They are parts of me...segments of the whole. Protagonists of the same cause. I share them, not as singular personal flights, but having them, my joy, my despair, as agents of my growing self.
Once, my despair had wrapped me in a drowning bog. It was smothering me. I was that bog, that despair. I was nobody, nothing, going nowhere. Afraid. The fearful me ducked when the first tiny beams of sunshine penetrated that bog. It was a suggestion of another way of choice. I knew my despair. I didn't know if I were ready for that unknown choice.
My despair locked me in a struggle as the realm of choice penetrated further, and spread into my consciousness. I took another look. I pushed out a bit from my despair and tried to see what these new ideas were trying to show me. I challenged all the choices to show me they could do more for me than my fear of the unknown would let me handle. It came to me, my old ways, the present me, wasn't working well. I stood aside and looked again. I lifted myself from my despair. I separated from it, and from my fears, determined they were not me.

I saw a choice. A possibility for joy.
I knew I must not let even joy, become me. I had to be free to choose. To respond. I was I, a choosing being, who could select my state of living and possess each state as it came to me, rather then be possessed by it. My place was here I made it. And understanding my realities, I could make it what I wanted it to be.

I know my despair...but it is not me.
I know my joy...it is not me. They are my choices...moving states within my being.

I need not fear change...for it is that....and if a current segment is unpleasant...it is simply that, a segment of a growing me.
Only I make me be what I am.

June

Relations course. The members, except for Lil and Esther Colliflower, were nuns from Holland who operated Bethany Home for girls in Miami. The three hours credit from the course started her on a path to an Associate in Arts Degree from Miami-Dade and a Bachelor's Degree from Shaw University's University Without Walls. She calls us now and then, and seems as much on the go as Roy Fairfield, caucusing all over the United States and Africa.

ESTHER COLLIFLOWER was a former nurse with eight children growing up fast. A veteran director of numerous civic and religious causes, she was experiencing growing intolerance of intolerance in herself and in others. Her husband, Owen, a court-reporter, was blessed with tolerance and humor enough to survive Esther's all-out plunge into re-educating herself. Years earlier at the University of Pennsylvania's Nursing School, Esther had earned "A" grades for three years in some of the toughest science courses there. Because she had been a *nursing* student instead of an *academic* student, her credits couldn't be counted toward a bachelor's degree, she was told when she tried to enroll at the University of Miami. She gave up on further education until we offered a self-directed course at Bethany House a few blocks from her home. Esther combined just the right ingredients of love, empathy, sensitivity, and *ham* to be a natural at facilitating learning. Like Max, she really cared, and her caring spoke loudest in her skill at listening to others.

Soon after Esther enrolled at Bethany House, she called me. The sisters had elected her their spokesman. She had an urgent request from them for me to attend their Human Relations group meeting that week.

"They want to use the Inter-Personal Feedback Form," Esther said. "But they're scared to if *the professor* isn't with them. They live together, yet seldom share their personal feelings with each other."

The self-directed course plan called for my attending a beginning session, one at mid-term and another for evaluation at the end of the sixteen weekly three-hour sessions. The other 13 sessions students could use tapes and printed materials I provided them, or they could improvise on their own. I had started the group at Bethany only two weeks before Esther called me to come back. I explained *leaderless group theory* to Esther, and said the group shouldn't become dependent on me. It was important for group members to take responsibility for their own learning. Then, of course, I agreed to come.

The Inter-Personal Feedback Form used by each group provided a way to give feedback on how members helped or hindered the group. It included such things as talking too much or not enough, listening intently, etc. There also was a blank slip on which to share anything one wanted to share. The feedback slips were distributed by the group's elected coordinator anonymously.

The sisters at Bethany wore modern dress instead of nuns' habits. They were good-humored, full of curiosity, and anxious to learn, as one of them said, "what makes us tick." We held a circle meeting where everyone shared, then I passed out the Inter-Personal Feedback Forms. During the next few hours a lot of, what seemed to me, little things were shared and discussed.

The nuns assured me that just beginning to share such personal feedback was a very big thing for them. One discovered that her fast driving in the convent's station wagon scared the others to death. Another learned how much she was appreciated for the many ways she found to help the others. A few misunderstandings were straightened. A few tears were shed. Lil and Esther said it was their *baptism*. The sharing made them feel really a part of the Bethany group. I felt that way too.

In the spirited atmosphere of Bethany, the *mutation* from self-directed learning group to Life Lab began to occur. I enjoyed their morning group so much, not to mention the lunch they insisted I eat with them, I went back frequently.

We were eating a Dutch pizza floating in hot melted cheese in Bethany's cozy dining room

11 our view

TOM FRYER

Reading this manuscript, I realize that Life Lab is still exciting. It was exciting from the start.

Let me make three brief points. The first has to do with Mac Smith, the second with Miami-Dade, the third deals with the future of our society.

The rarest of human beings is the person who combines a creative mind, rich in dreams and ideas, with patience, a capacity for work, and attention to detail sufficient to fight (and win) the innumerable battles required to bring new ideas to life in a world of hassles and constraints.

Mostly the best one can do is to find an idea person (whose ideas often die in translation to reality) or a super nuts-and-bolts person (who typically lacks the creative spark to conceive new things).

Mac Smith is one of those incredibly beautiful people who combine both talents. When such a person emerges, the administrator's special responsibility is to make it possible for him to do his thing. My job was to serve as mine deflector, staff coordinator, and logistic supporter, but mainly I needed to keep out of the way so Mac could work his magic. The trust/integrity linkage, of course, was the key.

Serving as the chief executive of a large, complex educational system, I have a great longing for people like Mac. Unfortunately, talent is unevenly distributed in the population. Extraordinary talent is extraordinarily rare. The world has too few Mac Smiths.

The second point treats the context in which Mac was permitted to pursue the development of Life Lab. It is true that he received, I believe, an uncommon degree of latitude at the Downtown Campus. As I have just said, this was in large part because of Mac himself.

But it must also be noted that at the same time Mac's program was beginning to emerge, my immediate superior at Miami-Dade, the President of the College, Peter Masiko, Jr., was giving *me* the freedom I needed to develop the entire Downtown Campus. This gave me the chance to provide Mac the freedom he required to work on Life Lab. Thus the trust/integrity chain was at work "up the line." Had I not experienced this freedom, it would not have been possible to give Mac his.

This enabling relationship was further elaborated since President Masiko's immediate superior, the Board of Trustees of Miami-Dade Community College, was granting *him* the broad directionary latitude he had to have to enable me in turn to do my job at the Downtown Campus. And so on.

Thus the entire Life Lab development should be seen in a larger organizational context having its roots ultimately in society, where, based on trust, reciprocated by integrity, public servants were allowed to pursue goals and objectives that ultimately worked to the benefit of students and the community.

Third, there is a message here for politicians and policy makers. The message is that the repressive elements of legislative and bureaucratic control that press upon us ever more tightly from state, federal, and system-wide sources threaten to kill the crucial, creative adaptation to important needs at the local levels in our society.

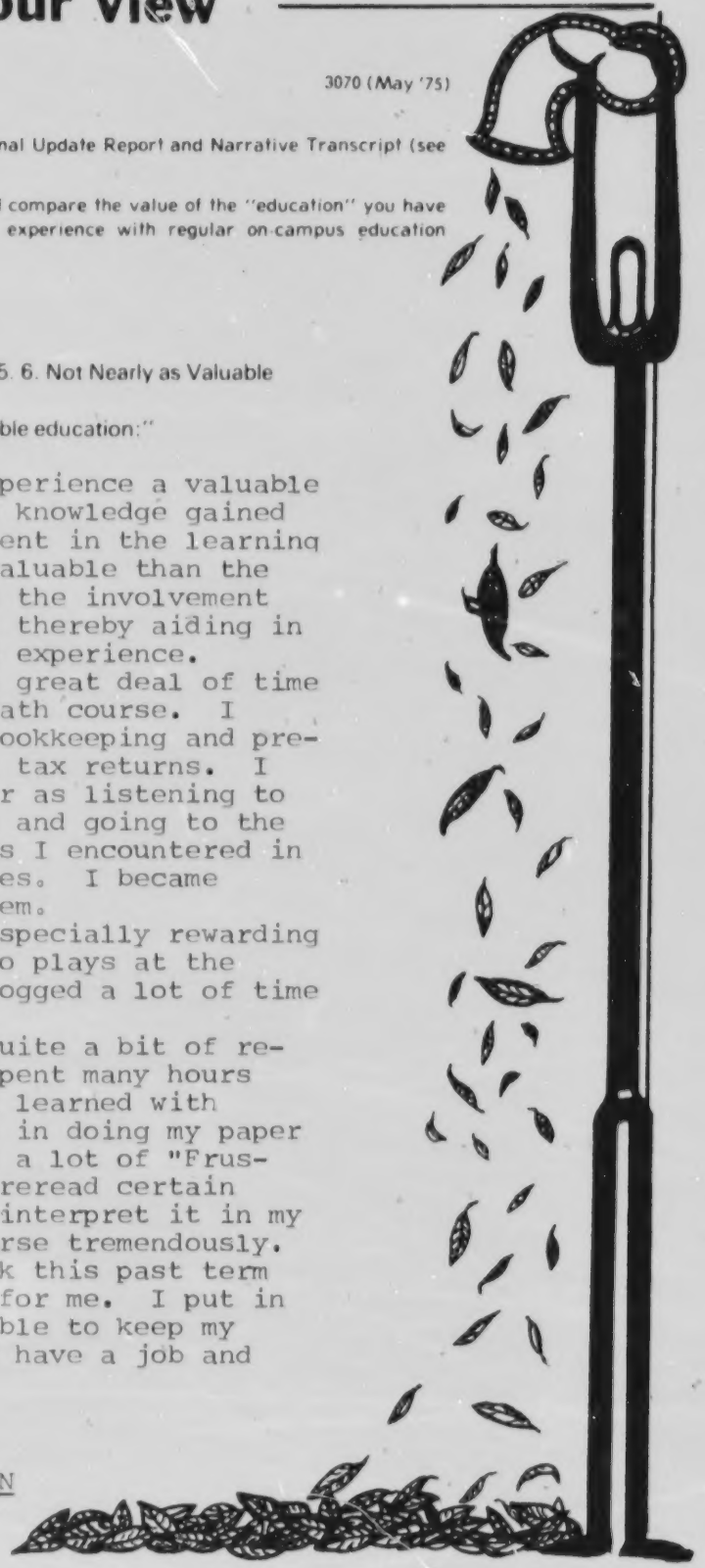
To state and federal policy makers, flexible systems that allow wide latitude to subsidiary systems have a terribly untidy look. One atrocity story about the abuse of discretion at a local level usually is sufficient to add a new incremental layer of control from above.

The important principle is that *control should be exercised through leadership. And the* implementation of this principle must be through management by exception—the rifle not the shotgun. In a system highly controlled from the outside, Life Lab would never have been possible.

when Esther and Lil announced they wanted to take more courses with me.

"If we can direct our learning in two courses," Lil said, sweetly smiling, "why can't we self-direct a few more? While you eat, Esther and I will tell you what we want to do . . . "

Esther Colliflower was one of Life Lab's first two students...its first volunteer staff member...its first paid paraprofessional...its first graduate to earn a master's degree and be promoted to the professional staff. (She now is a co-director of Life Lab and she is working on her Ph.D. degree.)



LIFE LAB PROGRAM EVALUATION 3070 (May '75)

Important: We must have this evaluation with your Final Update Report and Narrative Transcript (see back) to complete your study contract.

1. Please rate on the following scale how you would compare the value of the "education" you have received in the Life Lab program with your experience with regular on-campus education programs.

About the same ↓

Much More Valuable 6. 5. (4) 3. 2. 1. 0. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. Not Nearly as Valuable

2. Please describe what you mean by a "valuable education:"

I consider the Life Lab experience a valuable education because most of the knowledge gained comes through direct involvement in the learning experience. It is far more valuable than the traditional classroom because the involvement establishes a concrete basis; thereby aiding in the retention of the learning experience.

As previously mentioned, a great deal of time this term was devoted to my Math course. I learned the fundamentals of bookkeeping and preparing corporate and personal tax returns. I fulfilled my study plan as far as listening to and evaluating the math tapes and going to the Math Lab to solve any problems I encountered in doing the problems on the tapes. I became familiar with the metric system.

My Humanities course was especially rewarding too this term. I attended two plays at the Coconut Grove Playhouse and logged a lot of time for T.V. plays and dramas.

In Psychology 211, I did quite a bit of research for my A project and spent many hours reading and discussing what I learned with friends. I had a lot of help in doing my paper on "Frustration." I also had a lot of "Frustration!" I had to read and reread certain parts many times in order to interpret it in my own mind. I enjoyed this course tremendously.

As far as learning, I think this past term in Life Lab was the best one for me. I put in a lot of extra time and was able to keep my work up to date even though I have a job and two small children at home.

SUBMITTED BY LYNN LORE

STAFF ADVISOR: SUE GOLDMAN

PART 4
AN ATTEMPT TO UNRAVEL THE GAMES WE PLAY

I took Esther's and Lil's request to my boss, Tom Fryer.

"They want us to register them as full-time, self-directed students," I told him.

"If that's what they want, why shouldn't we?" he asked.

"The only reason would be administrative problems. I'd like to work on it," I said.

"Then, if it makes sense to you, let's give it a try," Tom declared.

That was the simplest thing of all, deciding to give the idea a try. There were special circumstances that made the decision-making process at Downtown Campus so easy.

In its own unformed newness, administrative structures had the looseness needed to allow Life Lab to develop as a "natural mutation." This concept is beautifully described by Richard Cornuelle in his book, *De-Managing America The Final Revolution*. Cornuelle believes real innovation occurs only in "random and unpredictable" ways, rather than in "contrived" fashion.

The origin of Life Lab was "random" in that it was not an ivory tower invention of faculty, but a spontaneous response to the needs of two students. Esther and Lil were excited about their idea, and I was enthusiastic about working with them.

Often student excitement and faculty enthusiasm are no match for the academic chain of command. Before an idea can be tried, it has to filter through authority gates controlled by deans, committees, and, if it means staying open unusual hours, by security too. This management process functions to iron out any "randomness" and "unpredictableness," the very elements Corneulle suggests are essential to innovation.

If Cornuelle's theories are valid, educational institutions should make it easier to try out new ideas and tougher to keep old ones going indefinitely. After showing how Life Lab developed on the principle of "uncontrived adaptability," I hope to show how Cornuelle's ideas might help *de-manage* educational bureaucracies to make them more *manageable*.

Important in Life Lab's development, Tom didn't drain our enthusiasm by dwelling on things that could (and would) go wrong. He started with the big picture, instead of the small.

"Philosophically, what's our function in Lil and Esther's case?" Tom asked when I brought their request. "Maybe it's simply to help them find learning goals important to them. Then, help them find resources and assistance to accomplish their own goals."

"I buy that," I replied. "They are the only ones who can say what learning experiences have value to them. The one thing I don't want is for them to tell me, as their teacher, what they think I want to hear. That's my experience too often in classes."

"Mine too. Psych the profs. That's the name of the game," Tom agreed. "Figure out what they want, and give it to them. That's the hidden curriculum we teach so well from kindergarten up.

"If you can break that cycle, get students to think for themselves - damn it, be themselves, and not play games for some authority figure, I'll . . . "

"Authority . . . " I interupted, as our conversation unloosened a new flow of ideas. "Maybe that's the name of the game we play.

"Psych the students into thinking we've got answers they need. What else have we got to offer? If I tell Esther and Lil I'm not their 'answer man,' what do I tell..."

"Yeahh," Tom's face was pink and glowed with excitement. We were, as Price Cobbs would put it, onto our own *case*.

13 our view

Frances Ginsberg, a 65-year-old immigrant from Hungary, is "polishing up" her English as a Life Lab student volunteer in a drug rehabilitation program. Recently, she was "caught" taking more than the maximum allowable number of credits at Miami-Dade. When she asked who she could appeal to, she was given the name of Dr. William Stokes, vice president of Downtown Campus. Following is a copy of the appeal she wrote but did not mail. She included it in her final report for her Life Lab documentation.

Dear Dr. Stoak:

I am Frances Ginsberg, and this my apology for being a Credits Tief at Miami-Dade.

Yes, I am. I got more than 17 credits the rest of the students only can get. I finished 20 credits and six more was in Life Lab. I am a rotten tief. I am not sorry. I enjoyed every moment. I worked my as off. I slept only 4 or 5 hours a day. The rest of the time I sharped my mind. I started 5:30 a.m.with the Sunrize Semester. I didn't miss a day of classes. I shocked my Advisor with 36 tapes and book reports 11. It was not too bad.

But a tief is a tief, and my Life Lab Advisor said, "Frances, what the hell, I heard 23 credits you have? My God, what are you trying to do?"

I didn't want to make her cry, but I have 5 credits more in the Florida International University.

I am a criminal of what? Well, I must face it, its look bad. I learned in my Country, if I think I have a right, then I fight for my right. The American go to the court, they sue their mother's grave. Greece I like better. I like the apology what Aristotel wrote, "The unexaminated Life is not worth Live, etc."

I would like to write my own apology:

My Sisters and Brothers in the Life Lab. You are not really angry in your heart. Mostly of you have admiration for me. You see I did all the stealing in English, my second language. You may think of it, "How the hell she could do it, this son of the old beach?"

But still the rules is a rules. Yes. But I broakt Hitler rules. I didn't die. I broakt Stalin rules. Now I broakt the college rule.

Here is my apology. I born in Budapest as a Jew in the church mouse poor family. From my mother's breast I drink the starving for education. Also for freedom. I thought only education could make me free. Getting "high" in my mother and father house was books, music, philosophy, science, and one more - helping others.

I came to U.S. 1946 pregnant with 2 years old child. I married a scollar, he was the teacher in my English class. We worked hard. We put 5 children through to college. Also my husband to college to learn psychology, he told me teaching English was not enough. He became a Doctor on 1968 June 4. On 1968 June 6 he was in the gray coffin.

We wanted to make a free clinic for drug problem. You see I didn't give it up. I stayed up night after night. I learned English. I was a slave for my wish. I remembered I must be free. Only education could give me my freedom. I learned it the hard way. No husband or my children could learn it for me.

"If you give up your teacher authority, Mac, what do you have left?"

"I've got whatever of *me* isn't hooked into the authority trip. It would be interesting for teachers to look at themselves that way. To imagine they had to teach without the power to dictate what students must learn, without the power to punish..."

"I believe we're now dealing with the gut issues of education." Tom declared. "But what I like best is we're not off at some conference playing abstract games in semantics. We're talking about two live students, and what difference college can make in thier lives. What's Mac Smith's role in this case? What do you, as a teacher without authority to dictate or to punish, have to offer Esther and Lil?"

Momentarily, I had a sinking feeling. Tom was asking a real question that needed an answer. We sat in silence for a minute or two, both struggling with issues at the cutting edge of our understanding of what education was, or should be, all about.

"I won't know how I can help them until we start working together." I began, groping to more clearly define a new role for myself. "My first job might be to help them pick courses that relate to their own goals. Then I'll help them get registered."

"You will have to work out a late registration deal with the Registrar. That will be your first hassle.

"Which brings up my role in this affair. Because I'm enthusiastic about your project, doesn't mean everybody will be."

"You mean," I exclaimed in mock horror "the Registrar won't drop everything and get excited about registering Esther and Lil?"

"Absolutely right, old buddy. Neither will the Dean relish cutting special course cards for two students, nor the Bursar for handling extra checks. None of this can be programmed by computer. You'll have to walk the paperwork through, office by office."

"I know. I've done that already," I groaned in real horror.

So I could offer self-directed courses for my Union Graduate School project, Tom had added a new box to his organizational chart. Labeled "Task Force for Intergroup Relations," the box connected by a line to his office. As "Task Force Director," I had met with six self-directed groups, picked up their applications for admissions to the college, their admission fees, their registration papers and tuition checks. Then, walking the paperwork through the maze, I made sure each item was properly stamped and countersigned and in the hands of the proper secretary at its final destination.

"Here's what I can do," Tom announced seriously. "I'll assign Esther and Lil to the Task Force for Intergroup Relations. I'll authorize you to set up courses for them - whatever in your professional judgment makes sense. Also, I'll send a memo to Bill Stokes (Academic Dean), the Registrar, Admissions, and Bursar, making clear my support for what you're working on.

"They'll cooperate. But they also are running a college. Doing your thing can't be a priority that disrupts their routine too much. You work out the best compromise you can with each."

"And what about your role?" I asked. "Do you want me to be accountable to you?"

"We need more time to look at both our roles," Tom replied.

He was no longer reared back in his chair. His feet on the floor, he fingered papers as he talked, a sign he was feeling the pressure of time.

"Get Peggy to set another appointment for us. I'll sound out Bill Stokes on his ideas. You talk more to Lil and Esther.

"I will promise to send a memo about your project before you come back."

I telephoned Esther and asked her to plan a meeting with Lil and me after the next group meeting at Bethany House. Sisters Anne and Alice joined us in the Bethany parlor. Our planning was excited and animated, and Sister Ancilla, director of Bethany, looked in curiously several times. Once she asked what we were "celebrating." During the afternoon we accomplished three things:

Tell anyone who is against my credit tiefing, I do not have much time. I born 1911 Feb. 22. I can't give up until I am no longer living.

In 1974 September I left my children and my husband's grave in New York. I came here in Miami for the sunshine and to start my Doctor Degree.

Now I am volunteer worker in a drug clinic. I am sharing my knowledge with the young Americans, the troubled. They had only one thing in their mind, to get high on heroin. And for this they must do killing and robing and tiefing. American sickness. They want something they can't afford. They were brought up on credit cards without wisdom or good habits. My heart is breaking for them. Don't yours?

With my stolen credits, I am helping them. I cry with them. I share with them. I go to the other jails with them to visit their friends. They don't have anything else than each other. Nobody wants them. Everybody afraid to go near to them. Mostly they came from families like yours. We blame them, and we let our tv feed our children with crime.

With my stolen credits, now I am giving them a seminar. They like my seminar. They asked me to make it longer. I am making a pocketbook library for them. I make them each read one paragraph. After, we discussed it. Short stories by Hamingway and Checov. I bring them my records, Bach, Betoven, Mozart. They tell me how much I helped them already.

Visitors are permitted, come along with me on one of my seminars, talk with any inmate, ask if I helped them. Then see if you still want to take away my stollen credit. I will never give it back. I need it for fight against crimes.

I do not want make you angry, just for you to know I have grand children some of them eating T.V. dinners. Please leave with my wisdom. It is my last term. I need my extra credits for my graduation.

If you have any old ping pong table we need it in the jail or books for my pocketbook library. Or old pictures. Anything you don't need. Chess board. Music instrument.

Thank you for to read my apology.

Respectfully yours,

Francis

FRANCIS GINSBERG

First, we picked four more courses for Esther and Lil, which would make them our first full-time, self-directed students.

Second, they each agreed on a "learning project." Lil planned to organize a self-directed education course at New Convenant Church. Esther planned to organize a self-directed human relations course for prisoners at the Dade County jail. Both planned to keep a journal of learning activities each week. These included use of tape cassettes, films, video, books, as well as attending workshops, and working on their projects.

As a rough guide, we decided they should document, process and evaluate at least 20 hours per week. We agreed that in the journal, they needn't divide experiences artificially into subject areas, but would treat learning as interdisciplinary.

Our *third* accomplishment was to describe the nature of my new role. Lil said what she wanted me to be was "an ombudsman."

"Until now, college always seemed like a one-sided game to me," Lil said. "What I thought, what I wanted, din't count for --- didn't count for anything worth mentioning in a place like this!"

Lil grinned, and Esther leaned over and hugged her.

"Mac knows how I feel," Esther added. "When I was told my Nursing Degree didn't count, I knew how much academic institutions cared about students."

We agreed my job would be that of an ombudsman. I would represent student and college with equal concern.

That night I worked in my office at home. The office had been a wood working shop until I entered Union Graduate School. My last wood working project had been to line the walls with bookshelves, to build six tape storage compartments on casters that rolled under the workbench, and to convert the workbench into a recording center where I could edit and dub tapes for my self-directed groups. I also added a four-drawer file cabinet and a bulky, but reliable standard Underwood typewriter, a relic from my journalism days.

After dinner and a game of ping pong with my kids, I edited two tapes by black writers Louis Lomax and Malcolm X. These were for an inter-racial seminar a self-directed group planned to use the next day.

A voice on one tape asked the rhetorical question, "Why are we afraid?" The question came at a break in my editing. I was thinking of my meeting with Esther and Lil, and I had trouble editing the tape the way I wanted it. I played "Why are we afraid?" over and over, redoing the tape. Finally, I heard a light tapping on the jalousie window to my office door. Two of my children peered in, and Scott and Judy chorused together, "Dad, why are we afraid?"

It is still one of our family *sayings*. Anytime I'm up-tight, someone is liable to inquire in dead-pan seriousness: "Why are we afraid?"

I went to bed, but woke up an hour or so later thinking about my meeting with Esther and Lil. I slipped out of bed into my office to type the following memo to Tom:

Thurs., Oct. 15, 1970
TO: TOM FRYER
FROM: MAC SMITH

This is a crazy time to be writing a memo to you - 1 a.m.

I've been thinking about our meeting regarding Esther and Lil. I met with them, and I wish I had taped our discussion for you to hear. It all made such good sense.

The purpose of this memo is to tell you:

1. *Peggy has put me on your calendar for a long meeting next Monday afternoon. I'll elaborate on item #2 when I see you then.*
2. *Lil Williams suggested a metaphor to describe my role in working with them - an*

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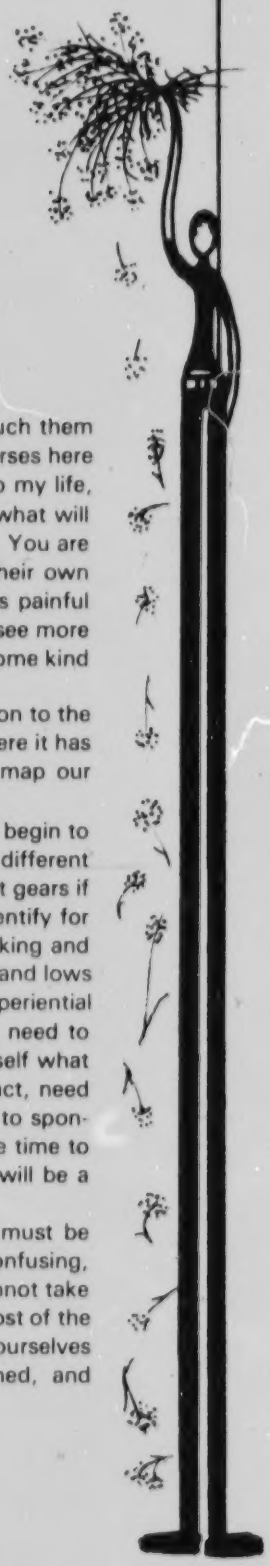

ELSYSE RAPAPORT

LIFE LAB IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REALLY LOOK AT YOUR LIFE.....

to look at all the different disciplines that we deal with in education, and not only touch them but see them as all part of your experience instead of seeing them as fragmented courses here and there. Let's see...how does psychology fit into my life, how does biology fit into my life, and so on... And as your looking, you're beginning to focus on what is of value and what will be discarded... For you - no one else is judging that. You are just really there with you. You are working in a community of learners. Everybody is looking for similar things but in their own unique ways. The focusing involved takes a lot of self discipline, but it is much less painful when you are doing this discipline, when you are working in a way that will help you see more of yourself because it is meaningful. There doesn't seem to be any freedom without some kind of discipline. And freedom is a choice, but also a tremendous responsibility.

Each semester we have to kind of pull together what we've learned in order to go on to the next. We have to have a way of knowing what we are doing, what we have done, where it has taken us, and compare it to where we thought we had wanted to go in order to map our progress.

If you can think of putting your own puzzle together or writing your own story and begin to ask key questions, like how does each experience fit into my life, and where do the different disciplines fit and how am I moving and where do I want to go, and can I be free to shift gears if that is important. If you can find some key words in whatever you are doing and identify for yourself key words that have meaning for you, and identify your own process by looking and recalling your entire experience you can begin to take a fresh look at your own highs and lows and you can reexperience in retrospect all the feelings that accompany the kind of experiential model Life Lab uses. You can see what you want to continue and what you might need to change. You can ask yourself what is working and what isn't. And you can ask yourself what your movement has been like. Are you as involved as you want to be? Do you, in fact, need some quiet time to assimilate and integrate? If you can look at yourself and be open to spontaneity, recognize the awareness that accompanies the new discoveries, and take the time to translate your experience into new possibilities, more options, wider choices - this will be a successful working model for you.

Try to accept the chaos. It will flow into form and it will focus. Your solution must be created from within. If we find that this isn't happening; that it is too threatening or confusing, or it's too uncomfortable for too many reasons, and we back down, then learning cannot take place. Sometimes it is simply because this is not the educational model for you. But most of the time, despite our need to leave the discomfort and confusion, we somehow find ourselves through the maze, miraculously learning more than we could have ever imagined, and tremendously grateful for the challenge of the experience itself.

"ombudsman." I really like this. It means I'll be listening to them and caring for their needs with the same concern I show for the needs of the college.

Instead of offering them a series of pre-planned classes to attend, I'll serve them in three major ways:

1. *I'll provide them with access to a variety of learning resources through the college and the community.*
2. *I'll serve as a consultant to help them identify and achieve their own learning goals.*
3. *I'll serve as an ombudsman to help them get credit for learning wherever and however it occurs. I'll also be responsible to Miami-Dade for the integrity of the program. Part of my job will be to make sure the credit we give does, in fact, reflect valid learning.*

This memo will give you a chance to think about these ideas before we meet on Monday. I'll go into more detail then.

I left my memo with Tom's secretary, Peggy Allshouse, the next morning. That afternoon she called me at my office at home where I did most of my work. Peggy read a copy of Tom's memo which he had already sent to all administrators at Downtown Campus. The memo asked them to support me and the Task Force in an important experiment in self-directed, interdisciplinary learning.

After reading the memo to me, Peggy added:

"Dr. Fryer also asked me to tell you your memo was fine. He's looking forward to hearing from you Monday."

THIS IS THE CONVERTED WOODWORKING SHOP WHERE LIFE LAB BEGAN.

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NORMA WATKINS

RESPONDING TO MAC'S VIEW

To me the Life Lab Circle and meditating are extraneous, only particulars. If these are the doors into freedom and the joy of learning, I would take them; but they feel like just another system. Obey our rules: the beanbags, the closed eyes, the energy flowing to the left, and you can come in. I wanted in because Life Lab offered me an opportunity to experience education as I could not in the traditional classroom. Maybe this is the secret: Miami-Dade is a system which Life Lab uses to its advantage (and the college's); Life Lab is a system which many different advisors use; and the advisors each have systems which their students use. The second secret is, perhaps, that the use must always be for the good of all parties.

Now again, when I hear advisors say that they have a fantastic new model -- they'll see all forty of their students in a large group once a month and let them come in as needed in between -- I wonder: is the design as good for the student as it sounds for the advisor? (and I do think some of the best things in the world were invented by lazy people). I guess it all comes back to trust. But when you get as large as we are now in 1976, with thirty-four on the staff, we cannot know one another well enough or see one another often enough to trust without knowing. And knowing becomes accountability. If an advisor can show by logs of her own and results from her students that the most radical system works, Life Lab will buy it. People like the word "trust"; it is used often at our Staff meetings. They are not nearly so fond of accountability; that smells of bureaucracy. I don't know the solution. My feeling is we ride a see-saw between freedom and structure. At times, freedom is stressed; rules are relaxed; advisors are trusted without written proof; students are trusted without written performance. Gradually, we hear rumors of the illiterate we have graduated; the student who has not found his advisor for four months; the policemen who know which advisors will let them earn credit for doing nothing. Tensions mount. The see-saw swings the other way. Rules are instituted; hours are maintained; students' performances are monitored in certain set ways; the "contract" is carved in stone. No deviations are allowed; people who cannot fit into a structure are frowned upon; they are "irresponsible." Grumblings arise. Where is the old Life Lab? Where is the freedom? the choice? the "trust"? And the see-saw begins a swing backward toward freedom. I think the tension between the two extremes is healthy: a reasonable amount of accountability with flexibility to use the system in original ways. I feel we will always be shifting the see-saw, questioning our purpose, re-arranging our values.

. . . . . .

And . . . . in support of Mac's quote of Cornuelle, on the fact that no education need take place in these accredited institutions: My husband, Bruce Rogow, who is among the finest civil rights lawyers in the country has said: "If I learned one thing in my three years of law school that helped me later when I began practicing law, I don't remember it." (He is now teaching law full time.)

PART 5

A CHAIN OF TRUST BEGINS TO GROW, AND GROW, AND GROW

When I met with Tom he was beaming.

"I talked with Bill Stokes," he said. "Bill is [illegible]ent behind you. We agreed you should work out of my office until I see how your idea dove[illegible]."

"Bill is helping already," I told Tom, holding up course cards. "Esther and Lil will bring their tuition this afternoon. We'll walk through the registration process together."

"I like the ombudsman notion Lil suggested," Tom began.

"To get credit, students must articulate their learning. Lil might do this in a journal, or some kind of report, or on a tape or a film. Esther might articulate it in hieroglyphics. I don't care.

"The main elements are: *One*, we trust students to decide what's important. *Two*, students communicate what that important learning is, in order to get credit for it.

"It seems," Tom continued, "I should play the same role with you. I trust you in the same way you trust Esther and Lil. At the same time you are responsible for communicating to me what we're giving credits for."

I jotted down on my notepad the words "TRUST-INTEGRITY CHAIN." This, also became a basic concept of what was to become Life Lab.

"Occasionally, I'll ask to see Esther or Lil's folder so you can fill me in on what they're doing," Tom said. "As long as I feel they're learning the equivalent to what I think students learn in our average classrooms, you can continue.

"If I decide it's questionable, you can complete the contracts you've already made. But we'll phase out the experiment; hopefully, with the attitude that we had tried what seemed like a good idea, but it just didn't work."

I didn't see Tom again about Life Lab for a couple of months. I expected him to call me in to *articulate* what Esther and Lil were doing, but he didn't. By the time we set up another meeting, two more people wanted to become full-time, self-directed students. One had been sent by Fred Shaw. The other had been *hooked* while listening to cassette tapes Esther was using as part of her study plan.

The cassette library used by the self-directed groups showed an unexpected surge of popularity. Tapes by Carl Rogers, Margaret Mead, Louis Lomax, Lerone Bennette, Jr., Ashley Montagu, Malcolm X, Arthur Jennings, Dan Fader and others stirred excited discussion in groups. Students also took them home to play for husbands, wives, mothers, children and friends. Three groups of public school teachers were taking self-directed courses in human relations. In their "meeting minutes," they reported using both tapes and feedback forms in faculty meetings and in their classes.

At my conferences with Esther and Lil, they occasionally brought others who had heard a tape and wanted to know more about where it came from. When visitors asked how they could get into the program with Esther and Lil, I honestly said I didn't know. I wasn't anxious for more full-time, self-directed scholars. I was too busy keeping track of six groups for my Union Graduate School project, attending weekend workshops around the country whenever I could, and teaching regular classes in human relations and English. But when two would-be students persisted, I went back to see Tom.

Tom looked through Esther's folder and Lil's. Their journals told a story of deep involvement in their own learning, and involvement in the community - the very community Downtown Campus was committed to.

"It says here," Tom remarked, leafing through the journals, "that Esther already has two groups of prisoners studying human relations in their jail cells. It also says Lil is running an education group at her church and applying for a grant to start a day care center."

"That's what we are *articulating* to you," I kidded. "And Lil's group got the grant. And now

17 our view

WENDY RING

At the time I entered Life Lab, I was developing teen programs for the YWCA, organizing for cooperatively owned businesses to provide jobs for youth. I had just left high school, my junior year, and heard about Life Lab through a student, Melinda Backer.

> By the time I got into the program, it was focused mostly on older, more middle class people. Life Lab was not really relevent to my real life needs. The M-DCC courses we were permitted to take weren't the ones I was interested in. After one term at Life Lab, I constructed my own course of study which was an interdisciplinary project involving some courses outside of Life Lab's range of selections. For me, this was a better set up. I wasn't into rap groups, counting hours for documentation, going to seminars which touched lightly, but didn't go deeply into anything, kissing people I didn't know, using humanistic jargon, etc. Life Lab was not the place for me.

Life Lab has changed a lot since I left. It was always changing while I was there. But I think some things can be said that will probably hold true through it all, and these things relate to the youth/middle-aged dichotomy I mentioned before. Life Lab is a cutting edge. It is good for cutting away the assumptions, the prejudices, the inhibitions, the rationalizations, the apathy, the cynicism. I'm talking about the emotional and intellectual baggage we pick up in the course of living. The stuff that encumbers us, but which we keep because we're too busy, too lazy, too scared, or too obedient to question, to take inventory of what we're carrying to see if there isn't something we couldn't put down. Life Lab is good at getting people to think. It's good at clearing away the shit. That's where people have to begin and Life Lab is a legitimate way of going about it. However -

> Life Lab is not academic. The atmosphere is very accepting, nurturing and secure because people can't look inside themselves when they are defending against outside opinions. The atmosphere is not critical. As long as you do something, then you're doing o.k. It's hard to get really solid, tough criticism from somebody who will admit that they know more about something than you do.

One more thing. (I know this is disjointed, but I'm buried in books and papers and exams and my mind is fascinated but overloaded.) It worries me that Life Lab is so sweet. It worries me that people come out so mellow, so open minded, so appropriately liberal, that nobody comes out angry. It worries me that the campus is in the middle of a city, two blocks away from Miami's worst ghetto, and Life Lab, the program that is the most flexible, the one with the greatest "social conscience", is catering mostly to suburban people. It bothers me that people end up with a liberated life style and a taste for organic foods, and everybody thinking the oppressor is someone else. Is Life Lab just making oppression a little more comfortable? And if we are educating people to change the world, or our part of the world, which is what is unquestionably necessary, how is it going to get changed? What do people have to know in order to do it? Education should ideally be open ended, all learning legitimate knowledge sought for knowledge's sake. But the world is far from ideal and there must be priorities. If Life Lab is to keep the world as it's classroom, then the painful required subjects are Social, Political, and Economic reality. Anything less and you might as well change your name.

I am now a student at Yale University with a special major in Community Health. My particular interest is in organizing for health care, decent living and working conditions, and attempting to integrate folk and scientific medicine.

two more want to join Esther and Lil. Do you want me to register them or not?"

"That's up to you," Tom said. "But if you get six full-time, self-directed students, you should get released from another regular class."

"You've got a deal," I declared.

I registered the two new students, and by the end of the next term I added another four. Two were referred by Fred Shaw, and two were *hooked* on tapes. With eight full-time, self-directed students, the dream that was to become Life Lab was a glimmer.

By word of mouth and by tape recorder, the message spread. Gradually, men and women from all walks of life began to call to ask what was this "task force thing" their friends were in. Each time that I tried to explain I felt I understood a little better myself. But I still had no answer for the question asked most: "How can I get in?" My stock reply became: "We'll call a meeting. Stay in touch with your friends, and they'll let you know when."

Finally, I borrowed a room at the Wesley Foundation at the University of Miami to hold the meeting. The only space assigned us by Miami-Dade at that time was the rectangular box on Tom Fryer's organizational chart. Classes met in "storefronts," which were booked solid every night.

It didn't occur to me to plan an agenda for that first meeting of my eight full-time, self-directed students and their guests. Polly Cook, the Wesley director, assigned us a place to meet upstairs in *The Upper Room*. This was a chapel with a huge oak table in the middle and a large painting of Jesus and his disciples at the *Last Supper*.

Our first task was to lug the oak table and the padded rails where communicants knelt to one end of the room. We arranged 20 metal, folding chairs in a circle. Soon the ring of chairs was full, and more people sat on the floor inside our circle.

"Let's spend some time identifying your needs," I suggested. "Then we will see what we can do to meet them."

By 10 p.m. I thought the meeting was going great. Students excitedly shared their projects. Newcomers shared their dreams, their frustrations, their desire to get on with their education, and their need for college credentials to get on with their lives. If our goal was to assemble an impressive array of human needs, the meeting was a success.

But if the goal was to meet one specific need many of the participants had in common, to get registered and begin directing their own education, then the meeting was a disappointing failure. One of the most anxious would-be students, Muriel Friedman, made this failure clear to me.

"Professor Smith?" she raised her voice and a hand to get attention. "Why don't we all stop talking, and you tell us what we should do. I, for one, want to register for the same kind of program as Esther, Lil, and Elyse. How can I do it?"

Muriel's suggestion was seconded by others, and the group focused on me. Suddenly, I felt totally inadequate.

"Muriel, I don't know what you should do next," I confessed. "To get our present eight students registered, we had to process each step by hand, and get exceptions for almost every rule in the book."

A wave of uneasiness swept through the group. A woman in a tailored blue suit with turquoise-studded jewelry let out a low, involuntary exclamation, "Oh shit!" I remember thinking I would have to tell Tom about that.

"I don't mean it's impossible to register more of you," I quickly added. "At this time, we're just an experiment Dr. Fryer and I tried with two students, only now we've grown to eight.

"One important concept of the experiment is that we don't plan in the abstract. That is, we don't develop plans for hypothetical students, then try to find real students to fit our plans.

"Tonight you've identified lots of needs of real students. If you want to become part of the experiment, then draw up a petition now. I'll take it to Dr. Fryer and tell him your need is to become full-time, self-directed students too."

18 our view

DIANE GUMINSKI

When Mac spoke of how the needs of the book were changing, as dead lines were drawing near, I knew it was time to write. We had decided to keep the weekly bookmeeting as an on-going thing, although the original purpose was now realized; the bringing in and sharing of materials for the book. Somehow, we just didn't want to breakup this special space that had been brought about by the sharing of ourselves. And woh-ohh, did we ever share, ups and downs, troubles, fears, happiness, friends, jokes, tears, silence, laughter, growing, and loving. And as we've been growing and sharing, the book has been growing, and it is so beautiful to be part of all this growth. This beautiful process, in which so many different people are putting special energy and caring into, and every thing is really flowing - clicking right into place.

I have been putting this writing off for quite a while now, for many different reasons (and excuses). Mainly, I am overwelmed when I try to start writing about my feelings for Life Lab; There are just sooo many things I want to express that I haven't been able to even start. Well, here I am - now - and starting!

I would like to say first, that Life Lab is the most fantastic opportunity that I ever could have hoped for or dreamed of. I have imagined and searched for, this type of idea and environment in different ways and places, for the past few years. And last summer, just as I was very depressed - wondering if life was worth living, very confused by my contradictory learnings, totally lost as to where to go or what do do, or if I should do anything at all - feeling like giving up - wondering if I would just die and get it over with since it was inevitable anyways - There was Life Lab. Just as I was feeling that I could never go back to school, and wondering what I could do and how to support myself if I did not have those pieces of paper called degrees, unsure of whether I wanted to live within this society with so many rules that go against how I felt, and wondering if I could survive then otherwise and knowing I really could not be happy in another anti-social type trip and tired of just hanging out and partyin', and tired of lying to myself and hiding from myself and other people - of being afraid - And at that time I was turned on to Life Lab by my psychologist.

I think what may have kicked it all off is when I made a major change in my life the summer before I turned 15. The last ten years previous to that I had been devoted to ballet dancing, especially the last half as I was dancing every day. Then, in the ninth grade, having to cool off on my dancing because of a calcium deposit in my big toe, I started to hang out with kids at school. And I realized how small my world was; all I did was eat, dream, and think ballet. And all at once I learned about pot, drugs, skipping class, rock music, parties, how to be a flashy dresser, having sex, and that I had to lie to my parents or else fight with them and I became a 'hippie'. The family moved to get me away from the influence of my friends but equipped with my new knowledge I got new friends and more as I found more hip people at my new school. I had never like school and now that I knew how to skip out, I did it more and more. Eventually, I skipped myself right out of school as it caught up with me before I finished 10th grade. So I transferred to the Adelphi school which I thought I would like better. I did like it better and I found it was because there were a couple of teachers there who were interesting and interested; Only, I found this out when they quit, (poor management) and I realized that the independent study opportunity alone wasn't enough, because I could not feel the motivation to enjoy it. So, after tenth grade, I quit that too and moved out of my house that summer. I hung out, worked at a MacDonalds, struggled to keep an apartment with a boyfriend who couldn't keep a job, partied on pot, downs, acid, THC, and booze, lived on peanut butter and jelly, didn't buy clothes, got into a trip of being unmaterialistic and unaccepting of anything my parents had to say. I even turned down an offer of a car and money every month if I would go to Nova High. I just wouldn't have anything to do with it. About half a year after I moved out, I started to get involved with yoga and vegetariansim. And a couple months later I quit doing chemicals (drugs) after my boyfriend almost died from an overdose of crystal THC. That

Tom was delighted with the petition bearing 20 names, and with my report of our first meeting. He read aloud the names on the petition, then asked how many were taking college courses now.

"None," I told him. "Most dropped out to get married or start their own careers. They are either turned off by classes, or they can't fit into our regular class schedule. Many have done a good job of educating themselves."

"If they've already educated themselves," Tom asked with a grin, "what can we offer them as freshmen at Miami-Dade?"

"Labels like freshmen and sophomore don't have much meaning in what we are doing," I said. "I think right now we have self-directed freshmen directing themselves in doing *graduate level* work, and that's great for them. But it's not, in my book, better or worse than other students whose needs direct them in learning activities that may not seem, academically, nearly as *advanced*."

"That answers my question," Tom said. "You may be discovering a new clientele, and this could be just the beginning."

"Then, should I try to hand-process 20 more students through the Registrar's office? They'll flip."

"Try it, and we'll support you. Bill likes what you're doing and will cut whatever course cards you need.

"If you can get 30 full-time, self-directed students, that will equal a full teaching load. You could phase out of classroom work altogether."

Esther and I planned our next community meeting to be held in the spacious lounge at the Wesley Foundation. Seventeen of twenty who had signed the petition came with tuition checks already written. Also, six new candidates came, including our first contingent of younger students. Shira Baumgard and Gary Eisenberg had dropped out of the University of Florida, and Doug Duda had dropped out of Northwestern University. All were high achievers academically in high school and college.

"I was achieving good grades," Gary explained at the meeting, "but nothing else seemed worthwhile. I felt I had to quit to get on with my education."

"I agree with Gary," Shira said so softly the whole circle seemed to sway in toward her to hear. "I think if I stayed at Gainesville four years, I'd go crazy."

"I'm pre-med," Doug told us. "The competition at Northwestern is so bad, all you think about is how to beat out the other fellow. That's a lousy way to train doctors who ought to be dedicated to helping their fellow man."

In contrast to our first meeting, that night we had a plan. In small groups we spent half an hour drawing "life maps" in color on newsprint. We charted in our most important learning experiences and discussed them.

Esther then posted more newsprint on a wall with sheets labeled *LIFE LAB - PAST*, and others labeled *LIFE LAB - FUTURE*. Each group reported important learning experiences they had shared out of the past. For many, *self-discovery* was the common theme. They learned from experiences that happened in life far more often than in formal educational settings.

"If life has been your most important learning resource in the past," Esther observed, "it probably will be in the future too. Let's brainstorm things you'd like to learn in your own life lab, and get credit for it."

The list of ideas covered three *LIFE LAB - FUTURE* sheets before the allotted time ran out. Gary Eisenberg raised his hand and stood up, his face beaming.

"Esty Colliflower, you're beautiful," he announced. "I am sold. How do I sign up for Life Lab?"

"I'm glad you asked, Gary," Esther interjected, laughing." We have a neat surprise for you. You can start work on your own Life Lab tonight. To get credit for the life map exercise, you have to do three things:

summer, I was desiring to travel across the U.S. and just before summer I got involved with Kundalini Yoga and so we traveled with a group to New Mexico for a summer solestice and that took all of our money and we sold most of our belongings. So moving into the ashram seemed like a neat thing to do when we got back. Unfortunately (and fortunately) I made some assumptions and I had expectations of freedom and creativity, eating healthier, doing yoga, having space to be me...And I found that to live there happily I had to be what they wanted me to be and from my point of view what was wanted was too rigid and restricted and I couldn't be happy being that. So, we moved out at the end of the summer. We moved into another apartment, and after a couple of months, I finally realized that I didn't want to be there either and the only thing that was keeping me was not wanting to admit to my parents that they were right - that I couldn't be happy with this guy or this type of life. So I broke up and moved back home and got a job at a men's clothing store. And I got a new boyfriend (the asst. manager of my store) and I moved out again in January of '75. I enrolled in B.C.C. and dropped out after a couple of weeks; I just couldn't get into going to boring classes 5 days a week. Four months later, I moved back home, he went home up north and I was going to join him that summer, and I kept putting it off thru the summer - not wanting to stay home and not really wanting to go either. So, I hung out and partied all summer until towards the end when I started really getting into my depressions and I was just so lost and confused, I didn't know what to do. I was very insecure and tired of putting up the fake front that made people think I was calm and cool and together, when inside I was so scared and nervous I was beginning to drive myself nuts. Then I started seeing my psychologist who talked me into trying Life Lab. And Life Lab has been the most fantastic thing that could have ever happed to me.

Life Lab has been the vehical to take me where I want to go. Life Lab has been a tool in helping me find out where it is that I wanted to go. Life Lab has been the place where I can be, whoever I want to be. Life Lab, I learned that it is O.K. and great to make mistakes, and I'm learning to learn more every day. Here, I learned to enjoy learning and thru this I could handle a regular school class system. Life Lab is such a rich and beautiful experience. I feel so much love and support in this environment, I just get charged with energy. Sure it's not perfect; everyone seems to try a little harder though to give each other their own space, differences are more easily accepted, people are allowed to experience mistakes, support is given, love and caring more easily shown, sharing and helping each other out happens so much more often.

There are so many different people in Life Lab, sharing so many different interests and resources; I have been exposed to so many new concepts and ideas and old ones too, that I haven't been aware of or interested in before. I have learned to understand and accept differences in people that I put down before. I am really learning to listen. I am really growing. It amazes me. In this past year I have changed so much; I am growing mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. I am watching it, and loving it, and despairing from it, day by day. Sometimes it's so hard. The more my awareness grows, the tougher things get and then, after the toughness passes and I have learned a lot, it's beautiful

Life Lab has opened many doors for me, into myself and into the world. Life Lab is like a womb nourishing and supporting, giving me, the opportunity to fulfill our needs, internal and external. Life Lab has made it possible for me to change myself and my life in ways I could hardly ever dare to hope for. I am tremendously happy and learning to share it more every day. And I can truly say that I love going to school!

1. Record it in a journal.
2. Process it, and we've done that already by discussing it in our small groups.
3. Evaluate it. We'll give you a form for evaluations in a few minutes.

"But the neatest thing is you can register yourself as a laboratory experience too. In real life, we all deal with bureaucracies and computers, right?

"We need to know how to use bureaucratic systems to meet our needs, rather than getting bent, mutilated and spindled meeting their needs. Colleges are beautiful laboratories to study bureaucracies at work. Your registration can be an opportunity to learn more about bureaucracy, computers, and people.

"I'll give out the Registration Lab Packets now, and Mac will explain.

The eight-page packet had seemed a simple solution to a complicated problem when we wrote up the lab. I explained how it tied in with our core Human Relations and American Education in Transition courses. The lab packet suggested experiments students could try as they shuttled back and forth among the offices of Admissions, Registration, Bursar, Financial Aid, and Records.

LIKE: Try smiling at some stops and not at others, and record the different reactions your different behavior elicits.

ALSO: Try using the person's name you are dealing with, and compare results with the usual procedure when you don't know the name of people processing paperwork.

We provide a list of names of key secretaries, clerks, and officials students might meet as they *walked* their own registration through the system.

As I explained the steps, I realized self-registration was much more complicated than I had thought. In the end, I admitted to mixed feelings about the lab.

"I feel a little like Tom Sawyer telling you how much you'll learn whitewashing my fence," I confessed. "But it's still the only way I know to get the job done. Just keep a sense of humor, and it might be a rich learning experience. And log it in your journals."

The next day I showed the lab packet to Tom Fryer. Half way through it, he began to laugh.

"Students who finish this," he chuckled, "already are at the graduate level."

I showed Tom our newsprint lists labeled *LIFE LAB - PAST* and *LIFE LAB - FUTURE*. It was then we added "Life Lab" to Tom's organizational chart, and he confided his hope it might become an important part of Downtown Campus.

"It could end up as a department in Outreach or in an academic division, or maybe a separate division itself," he said. "But for now, I want you to begin writing down what Life Lab is all about - its concepts and goals. You've signed up 30 students, and we don't even have a description of what they're getting into!"

Tom then gave me a 30-minute short course in administration. My ignorance of college administration astounded us both. He consoled me not to be concerned yet with "RPA's," contracts for services, purchase request procedures, faculty assignment forms, etc. since I had no staff, nor budget, other than my own salary. But he emphasized I should never forget "FTE's." One FTE equals one Full-Time-Equivalent, that is, the equivalent of one student taking five courses.

A deeply humanistic educator and administrator, Tom was pragmatic too. He did not play games with reality, a trait for which I am forever grateful.

"At the delivery end, we can dream up all kinds of beautiful programs," he pointed out. "But at the receiving end, we get our money to operate just as though we ran a factory - so many dollars for each FTE we process.

"Life Lab will produce more than 35 FTE, counting your self-directed groups. That's excellent production for a staff of one, which makes you a good administrator!"

At this point we added an economic principle to the philosophical concepts we had agreed on. Life Lab would never plan anything that would cost more to operate than the average traditional classroom programs.

20 our view

LAURA STERN

I wanted to tell you about my daughter, Laura Stern, who graduated from Life Lab last year. She came to Berkeley, California to visit me and I encouraged her to fill out an application for admission at the University of California here. Although she was sure that she wouldn't be admitted because of her "untraditional" academic background, she indeed was admitted as a Junior. To the joy of her entire family and Laura, her course of study is within her grasp. She is a top student, studying Spanish, Linguistics, and Anthropology.

Obviously something happened to her at Life Lab, which at that time we didn't recognize. She learned to process her experiences so that she now has the discipline required to do well in a university.

I am grateful to Life Lab for the educational and financial aid which was given to Laura.

Thalia Stern

GENE BOSWORTH

The last we had heard of Gene Bosworth, he had joined the Institute of Cultural Affairs as part of his Life Lab study contract. His Journal showed that he moved into the Institute's regional house in Miami.

The Institute's staff usually present a seminar each term for Life Lab. They are mostly professional people and former clerics who have dropped out of the traditional systems. They are part of a tightly knit, disciplined and idealistic attempt to demonstrate more practical and more meaningful ways for human beings to live with each other. Their projects of social and economic "reformation" are located all around the world.

We asked the local staff for information about Gene. They said he was in the Pacific area and suggested we call his parents here in Miami.

Mrs. Bosworth said she and her husband had just returned from the Marshall Islands where Gene was working on an Institute social and economic project. Gene, she added, was very excited about the progress of the project. They had showed the people how to organize a purchasing co-op that had cut the cost of rice and other staples in half. They had helped organize an inter-island freighter service, improve manufacture of coconut products, and greatly increase the price they received for copra through a marketing co-op.

She gave us Gene's address and we wrote him, asking for a report. His reply came from the Institute's headquarters in Chicago where he had just returned, pending another assignment.

"Upon reflection," Gene wrote, "I'd say Life Lab gave me a chance to do some serious thinking about the future, and exposed me to a variety of possibilities to jump into. Finally, the worth of Life Lab showed up only after I made my decision to jump.

"Specifically, Life Lab enabled me to continue my education while engaging in what I considered meaningful work. Through Life Lab and the University Without Walls program at Northern Illinois University, I was able to participate in the Institute of Cultural Affairs program of Social Demonstration in the Marshall Islands. There I was part of a team of people who were enabling the Marshallese people with their economic and social development. The job I did was to manage a trading company for 18 months, all the while training a local man to step into the job. I have also worked in other business situations, gaining experience and broadening my grasp of business techniques and practical knowledge, at the same time continuing my education through Life Lab and the University Without Walls."

Our next student meeting turned out to be, for me, the crest of a wave. All reported the Self-Registration Lab a success. Some had made three or four frustrating trips to Downtown Campus before finishing the maze. But all said they finally did get registered, and they learned from the experience. Shira Baumgard and Gary Eisenberg reported that they would complete the final step as soon as their parents made an appointment for me to better explain Life Lab to them.

Our guests that night added to the air of optimism. Dean Jules Pagano came from Florida International University to tell us about a new state-wide External Bachelor's Degree, based, like Life Lab, on learning contracts rather than classes. Jules told us FIU was joining the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, which was building a national network of *University Without Walls* programs based on the same philosophy.

"Both Life Lab and our External Degree," Jules said, "will be considered *University Without Walls* units by the Union. I might add, you have a big headstart on most of the units. I am urging my wife, Helen, to join Life Lab."

Jerry Mandina, a volunteer staff member and director of *New Community School*, brought his own brand of good cheer. He offered to help anyone anytime. As for Life Lab, he offered us the use of the meeting place Temple Israel had loaned him for his school.

We did hold some Life Lab meetings as Jerry's guest at Temple Israel. Helen Pagano did enroll in Life Lab. Life Lab was listed as a *University Without Walls* unit, and we began receiving thick packets describing the latest developments of the UWW national experiment. Gary's and Shira's parents did call to make an appointment to see me.

Also, at that meeting, I gave out copies of the *Life Lab Concepts and Goals* Tom had requested I write. That short document, out of more than 300 documents and forms we have produced, is one of the few unchanged and in use today.

When visitors come to ask about Life Lab, we start with this document. If they understand what we believe are our goals, they likely will see that Life Lab makes sense. If they don't agree with our goals, with our concepts of education, it will be clear we hold different opinions on *what learning is* and *what's required to achieve it*. In such cases, it can be stimulating to share our different points of view, without trying to convert each other, or to justify Life Lab from a philosophical perspective it doesn't fit. A copy of the *Life Lab Concepts and Goals* follows:

LIFE LAB CONCEPTS AND GOALS:

***The broadest objective** for Life Lab can be described in three words: "Getting it together." "It," in this case, is **you**, the student, and all that goes on in and around you.*

No matter what your vocation, or how specialized the skills required for it, a basic assumption we are making is that it is important for you, as a person, to achieve understanding of yourself in your relationships to:

1. ***Your social environment***
   Understand the dynamics of your interpersonal relationships - how you come across to others, and the personal needs that motivate your own behavior. Understand the roles you play and the control, or lack of control, you have over them.
2. ***Your physical environment***
   Sharpen your sensory awareness of your immediate environment, the here-and-now moments of your life, the important details that can add deeper meaning in your existence. Widen your perception of universal relationships, how you fit into the wider world, and worlds of matter, energy and life.
3. ***Your own biological and emotional processes***
   Increase awareness of your own inner feelings and internal conditions: muscular

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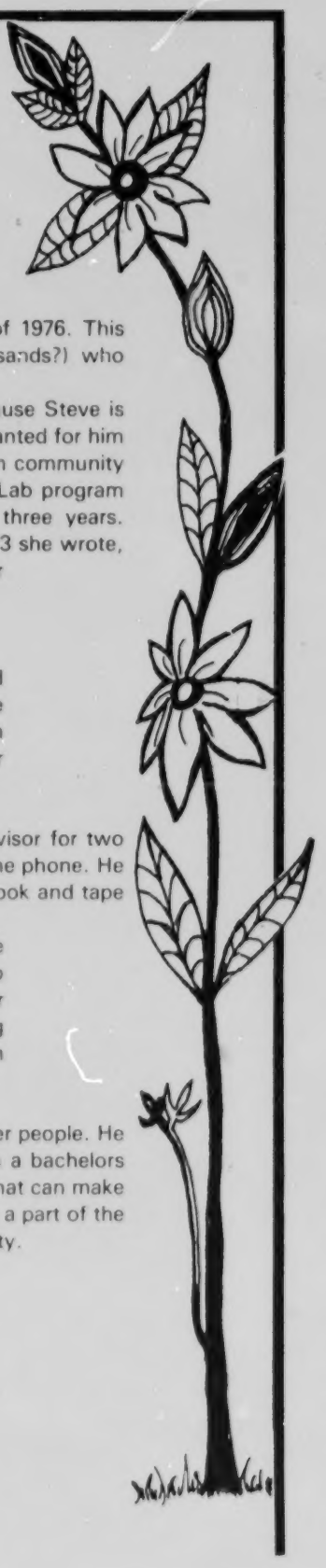

STEVE MC ALLISTER

Steve McAllister graduated from Miami-Dade Community College in April of 1976. This doesn't seem like a monumental happening, since there are hundreds (thousands?) who graduate each semester from Dade.

But Steve's story is different because he lives in Arcadia, Florida, and because Steve is quadriplegic. Steve's involvement with Life Lab began in 1973. Permission was granted for him to become a Life Lab student since there were no self-directed study programs in community colleges near Arcadia. There have been many letters sent between Steve, Life Lab program advisors, and Mary Morris, his vocational rehabilitation counselor in the last three years. Quotes from letters from Mary Morris tell the story in essence. In September, 1973 she wrote,

> "This young man has been laying in bed with no hope for a career for many years and now he has some hope."

Another letter written in January of 1976 completes the story and Mary writes,

> "Steve will be graduating in May with a 3.3 average. I am quite proud of him as I know you are. We have had a great deal of correspondence at first about him and he hasn't let us down. Steve and I have been talking now about furthering his education. He wants a four-year degree in counseling eventually to be a lawyer."

I have "known" Steve through letters and phone calls as I have been his advisor for two semesters. We have never met in person, but his voice is bright and cheerful on the phone. He writes beautifully, showing sensitivity as well as intelligence. Intermittently his book and tape reports have bits of his personal philosophy. He wrote,

> "At the risk of sounding disillusioned, I believe hypocrisy is the predominant trait today. We see greed, love of self, and are so pleased to be able to "take" our fellow man. It is a sad fact of our times, that children are taught this from infancy. Instead of measuring success in terms of service and love toward others, it is measured in how much accumulated wealth we can account for,"

Steve is now moving toward a life which is filled with service and love for other people. He has recently been employed as County Probation Officer and is trying to obtain a bachelors degree in the same way as his Associate of Arts. Hopefully, there is a university that can make the same arrangements as Life Lab was able to make. I'm really glad to have been a part of the process that helped Steve to obtain his goals and be a productive member of society.

Karen Kay

tone, nervous tensions, energy levels, state of being . . . and your relationships to all of Life.

4. ***Life's ultimate values and realities***
Expand your perspective on value systems and the relationship between your values and your sense of motivation, action and conflict. Deal with your views of existential reality, of death and of the unknown.

Some Concepts That Provide A Relationale For Life Lab:

1. *For some of us the division of study into separate disciplines such as math, biology, art, philosophy, economics, psychology, has a divisive rather than an integrative effect on our understanding of our environment and our selves. This frustrates our need [both emotionally and intellectually] to understand the whole.*
2. *When we are allowed to search for our own answers without being "locked into" the traditional content of several academic courses, the knowledge and insights gained are more apt to relate to our real needs and thus make a difference in the way we behave, think, feel, perceive the world around us, and perform whatever job we have to perform.*
3. *For many of us in many vocations, we can best learn the skills of a job and its interpersonal relationships by serving an apprenticeship in that job and by studying with someone skilled in its performance. [Vocations, as used here, include all professions.]*
4. *The skills required for most jobs [including most professions] are rapidly changing, and statistics indicate that most of us will radically change from one vocation to another at least several times in our lifetime; therefore, we suggest priority be given in education to self-understanding as it relates to making choices and to continual development of one's own potential rather than memorizing data and practicing abstract skills.*
5. *Education should be part of life rather than a preparation for life, and, in this sense, our vocational pursuits should begin during our educational program, not after it is finished. Also, there should be ample opportunities for us to continue to participate in educational programs whenever we feel the need throughout our lifetime.*

William J. Page, Jr., Secretary
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES . . . . . STATE OF FLORIDA
hrs DIVISION OF Reubin O'D Askew, Governor
DISTRICT OFFICE • 555 EAST CHURCH STREET • P.O. BOX 1418 • BARTOW, FLORIDA 33830
J. H. Hutchison, Ph.D., Program Staff Director
14 North Polk Avenue Arcadia, Florida 33821 PH: 494-0636

May 12, 1976

Dr. McGregor Smith, Jr.
Director, Life Lab
Miami Dade Community College
300 Northeast 2nd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33132

Dear Dr. Smith:

I am enclosing a clipping that came out in Sunday's paper which I thought you might be interested in. This is a clipping from the Sarasota Herald Tribune on our recent proud graduate, Steve McAllister. You did so much when we first got started on helping him get into this program and you showed such great interest that words cannot express how much appreciation Steve and I both feel for this. Since you said that you had never had quite anyone with his condition in the Life Lab I thought you would like this clipping to show people that the Life Lab can help and can be a success. Steve is quite proud of the fact that he is graduated and has done so well. He also is now the county probation counselor part-time and got the first paycheck he has ever earned. Without the education he received from Miami-Dade it is doubtful he would have gotten this position. Therefore I am sure that God is with you and you will do great things with the Life Lab.

Steve is planning on enrolling in FIU if he can get some response from them. He wants to major in both psychology and social services so that he can get a broad education. Anyway you can help assure his entrance will be greatly appreciated.

Again, I want to express my deepest appreciation for your help with Steve in rehabilitating this fine young man. Someday I am sure Steve is going to be one of the National Rehabilitants of the Year and Life Lab will get it's proper credit. I hope that in the future perhaps we can work with someone else through your program.

Yours truly,

Mary F. Morris

Mary F. Morris, Counselor

MFM/gjb

Enc.

PART 6

OFF THE CREST OF THE WAVE,

INTO THE QUICK SANDS OF BUREAUCRACY

One issue of concern to both Gary's and Shira's parents when we met was the importance of grades. Agreeing with Life Lab's philosophy in principle, they argued that *grades* are the main goal of education almost everywhere else.

How would Gary and Shira be graded? By contract.

Who would decide whether or not they had met the terms of their contract? We would do it together, with Gary's and Shira's evaluations carrying equal weight. I explained my ombudsman role, and the requirement they communicate and evaluate what they were learning.

Why couldn't they contract for all "A" grades? Because, I argued, that would destroy much of the purpose of Life Lab.

"Life Lab courses should not be graded at all," I declared. "Grades require qualitative judgments by outside authority. In grading, teachers make judgements that what this student has learned is worth more than what another student has learned.

"Grades are the basis for competition, and they imply that teachers know absolutely what learning is best for others. In the classroom, students are clear that grades are the main payoff in the educational game. It would be unfair competition for them if Life Lab students could contract to earn all "A" grades.

"It also would be suicide for Life Lab. If our students could compete for academic honors, the classroom teachers and academic deans would demand we teach the same things and judge on the same basis they do. And they'd be right."

Gary's and Shira's parents raised another point. Since Life Lab was required to assign grades, and since high grades were important for students transferring to universities and graduate schools, the grade limitation was unfair to Gary and Shira. In raising the issue, they helped me understand a fundamental reality about Life Lab: It never could be totally fair. The best I could do was communicate both its limitations and its possibilities. Beyond that, students would have to decide whether or not taking over responsibility for their own education in Life Lab would serve their own purposes best.

In Gary's and Shira's case, both they and their parents decided it was.

We formalized what we called our "basic grade contract," but left open the possibility for students to contract for "A" grades in up to half their courses. This made it possible to earn a "3.5 grade point average," sufficient to transfer most places.

At the same time we tried to de-emphasize grades, and we asked for approval for a *credit/no credit* grading system for Life Lab. Tom Fryer agreed to request modification of Miami-Dade's grading policy and computer system so we could turn in *credit/no credit* grades. But he included one condition before giving his final recommendation for our request - we would have to show evidence the new grading system would be acceptable to enough colleges and universities that our students could continue their education after they graduated from Miami-Dade. A team of staff and students mailed questionnaires to every institution of higher learning in Florida and to almost 400 more across the country.

We assembled some 200 replies in a looseleaf notebook with a summary for Tom. More than half reported they would accept our students with the *credit only* grades. Others limited the number of *credit only* grades they would transfer. Some would transfer them as "C" grades. Many indicated they would want a personal interview with the student. A few rejected the idea outright, reporting they would not consider students if a non-traditional grading system were used. A few accompanied their replies with warm letters commending our attempt to de-emphasize grades.

Tom reviewed the results of our survey and agreed to recommend our *credit/no credit* system

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GLORIA GORDON

Shortly before I entered Life Lab, I guess I envisioned it as being a study center that could offer a higher level of creative and cultural exchange. Instead, I found this semi-external study program lacking in many areas; (the faculty and the students, too -- many of whom were there to get an easy Associate in Arts degree). The greater majority of the students do not "get it together" with one another and exist in complete independence with one another and their advisors.

At this Miami Downtown Campus, where such a diversity and cross section of people meet, there could be cultural and socially potent ideas exchanged and developed. Many of the advisors and instructors are still into "straight thinking," remaining set in their ways, others are a bit low in their morale due to the freeze in their salaries.

When Life Lab first began, I think it had more of an integral and creative concept -- there were less students and more genuine commitment from them -- and they really steered away from the traditionally academic approach. They met one another at their houses, at the beach, shared in group projects, and, basically, there was a different degree of involvement between faculty and students. Sheerly as a result of such large numbers attending the community colleges in 1975, it is so much harder now to create the spirit and intimacy of close communications.

I am sure my feelings are not unique, and people that do not even think my type of way will tend to see what I am seeing.

I believe now there may be a need for **two kinds** of Life Labs where there is an opportunity for people with differing educational needs.

A) For people who are in jobs and need a degree for skills and job improvement, and who don't have the time to take the course work in the usual way.

B) The other would be for people like myself, who don't have a strict time commitment or a full-time job. People who are either discovering or rediscovering themselves, and need an opportunity to explore new learning material and experience themselves in a variety of ways; for these people, I think it would be great if they could choose from a wide, wide variety of courses to help them discover what their real needs are, and where they are going.

The programs offered for both of the above categories need not be separate, and in fact shouldn't be, but can overlap at a variety of places. Core content can and **should** differ. I would like, in the next few weeks, to develop a program for the B group as one of my Life Lab projects.

I have very few gripes about Life Lab. As far as the contract goes, the only portion that I have adverse feelings about is the mandatory interdisciplinary text. My personal feeling is that it forces you to look for things that you would like to keep rather than making it a natural thing. I feel people naturally keep things that mean something to them.

My worry about Life Lab is that I'm afraid that it will evolve into a more structured thing due to pressures exerted by the college itself and other concerned groups. Many are the times that I have seen a good thing ruined due to jealousy of what others have and due to disbelief of the value of something by those in power to make decisions on various programs and policies.

I have very strong feelings about Life Lab. For the first time in my educational life, I have found education to be a rewarding experience in the personal sense. Where I've found Life Lab to be harder in the sense of amount of effort one must expend, I've found that I've learned more and retained more than I have in the past twelve years of education that were forced upon me by "the system." Since starting in this program, I have gained much better insight into myself and in life. I find that I am more aware of what is happening around me and am better able to process its true meaning and importance.

I honestly feel that if a modified version of Life Lab could be integrated into our educational system, we would have better educated children and a lower drop out rate.

on a trial basis. The change ultimately would have to be approved by Miami-Dade's Central Administration. About a month later, the Downtown Campus Registrar told me the computer program was being modified to accept our proposed grading system.

I needed this good news to balance the bad on other fronts. Organizational *mutations* designed spontaneously to meet the needs of students are fraught with *unpredicatable and random* weaknesses, as well as with strengths. The system that worked fine with eight students totally broke down with 32.

Desperately, I tried to keep all student folders up-to-date on a week-to-week basis. My system for documentation had been based on frequent individual meetings and phone calls from students. Suddenly, it seemed every meal with my family I spent talking to students on the phone. Students who started their day early assumed I did too, and called early. The night owls called late.

Our tape distribution system also broke down. We had been stocking several copies of each tape and lending these out like a library. With more students and with more tapes added to the system, it became impossible to keep on hand the tapes students wanted when they wanted them.

Out of necessity, our *mutations* began to create new methods. We invented a *Summary Log Form* on which students could summarize and evaluate all their learning experiences. These forms greatly simplified the documentation process. They provided a "shorthand" record students could use in discussing their contracts. I also used them for *articulating* to Tom what students were doing and learning in Life Lab.

Another form invented then was the *Link*. The *Links* gave students a chance to share, to be resources for each other. *Links* were used to share original poetry, advice, pleas for help, recipes, recommendations on books and tapes, cartoons, and feelings about Life Lab in general. For awhile, we duplicated all *Links* and gave copies to all students. As the program grew, we no longer could afford to duplicate and mail all *Links*, so we now post them on a giant bulletin board.

Technology helped put our tape distribution system back in operation. Instead of stocking duplicate copies to lend like a library, we set up in the Audio Visual Departments on Miami-Dade's three campuses a master file of all Life Lab tapes. To order any tape, students went to the campus closest for them. A *listening copy* was made from the master tape for the student to borrow. High speed copies made it possible to reproduce a one-hour tape in only a few minutes.

Just as the Life Lab *mutation* seemed to become viable again, the registrar at Downtown Campus called with a double dose of bad news. Even though I had negotiated *credit only* grades with all my students, I would have to assign grades after all. Apparently, officials at several Florida institutions I had surveyed were raising strong objections to Life Lab's proposed grading system.

"You win some and lose some," Tom consoled me. "Your batting average is still high."

The other piece of bad news sent my average tumbling. Eighteen of my 32 students who had registered themselves did not appear on my grade rolls. Our "Self-Directed Registration Lab" may have been a good learning experience, but it didn't work. The college had no record of registration for more than half my students. "Must have bogged down in an office somewhere," was the registrar's diagnosis.

When I met with Tom about my 18 unregistered students, he wasn't as despondent as I. Instead of discussing a phase-out of Life Lab, as I feared he might, he talked of expanding the program "once you get the registration mess straightened out."

I spent most of the next three weeks at North Campus where our records were being stored until Downtown got its own computer terminals. This was, in retrospect, a most productive time for both Life Lab and me.

When the next term began, I was, for all practical purposes, removed from the scene of

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INTRODUCTION TO RAP TAPES

The following seven pages are excerpts out what began as a "5-Minute Update Tape."

Each term all Life Lab students are asked to make a 5-minute summary of their most significant learning on a cassette tape. Usually the summaries of 8 to 12 students fit on a 60-minute tape. These "Update Tapes" are put into the Life Lab tape system. Anyone interested in what students in Life Lab are learning and doing can go to the Audio-Visual Department, pick tapes at random and listen to the students tell their own stories.

Sometimes, however, students rebel. This is what happened on the tape transcript that follows. Three students, Bob Smith, Pat Thompson and her husband, Marty, met with their Staff Advisor, Al McClure, to make their "5-Minute Update Tapes." Several other students from their Peer Group joined them.

Before turning on the tape recorder, Bob announced to Al that there was no way *he* could summarize *his* learning this term in 5 minutes. Pat and Marty agreed. They asked Al to get more blank tapes, and that particular "5-minute" update lasted almost three hours. More than a dozen other students joined and left the group while the marathon update went on and on and on. Almost everyone contributed something.

The excerpts that follow are not attributed to any one person, but they are copied verbatum from the tape.

action until I could trace each student's records through an unbelievable snarl of paperwork. Veteran Life Lab students like Esther Colliflower, Lil Williams, Elyse Rapaport, Richard Adams, Dorothy Streeter, Bob Smith, and Stephanie Sladon served as volunteer staff.

They held meetings, advised new students, kept records straight, and sent communiques to me on the "paper battlefront" at North Campus. They "walked" each registration through for the new term, thus abandoning our "Self-Registration Learning Lab." They made sure this time each student appeared in the computer for the new term. I could never have done the job they did had I been there. I took this lesson to heart, and I determined to organize a new Life Lab staffing system when I returned. This was the root of Life Lab's career ladder by which more than half our staff started as student interns and worked their way up to staff positions. Many now are earning graduate degrees.

While away at North Campus, I learned three other valuable lessons:

The *first lesson* was about the all-pervasiveness of computer systems. Anything or anybody that does not show in the college computer simply doesn't exist as far as the college is concerned. Students aren't students until a computer printout says it's so. I learned, for the first time, how to order printouts, to interpret printouts, and, most important, how to enter new information into the computer, and how to take errors out.

My *second lesson* was about the people who keep the wheels (and computers) of a college turning - the clerks, the secretaries, and the assistants to the people with titles. If they like you and respect what you're doing, they'll help you, and you'll get your problems solved, no matter how long it takes. When I arrived at North campus' records office, "Life Lab" was a mysterious, trouble-making, ugly two words. As we began tracing our missing students, I gave each person a copy of our program description and some *Links* written by the students we were trying to help. It turned out the people in the records office had a philosophy of education too. They were eager to discuss it and compare it to Life Lab's.

Discussing philosophy with clerks and secretaries may seem like an inefficient use of time, but I don't think it was. In the end, it was they who figured out how to solve our problems. We were able to trace only three students to complete the registration process they had begun. We asked the other 15 to stop payment on their old tuition checks and write new ones. My friends at the records office simulated a whole new registration. We cut new course cards and fed them into the computer. We processed the new tuition checks, and generated paid receipts for each. The computer then dutifully printed out new grade rolls for Life Lab. I recorded the long overdue grades which key punch operators fed back to the computer. The jubilant crew in the records office cheered with me as the computer completed its final task for us. It printed out perfect transcripts for each student. They and the courses they had taken were safely in the system, at last.

My *third lesson* was on the importance of using the Xerox machine.

"Next time," a friend in the records office firmly advised me, "do not turn in anything to anyone without keeping a copy for your own files."

If I had any doubt about this advise it was erased a few days after my return to Downtown Campus. I was looking up some papers in one of the offices along our "Self-Registration Lab" route. In the bottom of an unused file drawer I spotted a suspicious folder labeled Life Lab. I opened it and found all our missing registration packets and checks. Someone, unsure what to do with them, apparently deposited everything in the drawer for safe keeping, then forgot about putting them there.

I sat on the floor and carefully leafed through the self-registration packets. Each was filled out perfectly. I started laughing, and the startled secretary in the office asked what was wrong.

"Nothing now," I told her.

I couldn't even get mad. The whole misadventure had taught me so much. Later, Esther told me I should "log it" and get credit for the whole self-registration mess. Esther was the only one I told about finding the folder until now. She was the only one I felt sure would laugh too.

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When I think of how Life Lab affected me, I get a really super feeling. All of a sudden I became aware of everything I did and just sat back and looked at everything. I started looking at other people and thought, boy . . they are really crude and numb and don't even know what's happening around them. And here I am, taking all this stuff in and I know it's always been here, but I've never been aware of it before. Then, I took in too much and my mind stopped. I wasn't aware of the stopping, but I closed up and I didn't even know what was happening. I was no longer willing to accept anything into my mind, only I didn't even know it. I was reading a lot, but I couldn't tell you about a book I'd read even though it was a book I thought I was interested in. I've blown the last semester because I couldn't handle it, the overload, but now, I've got to handle it and I'm back to do it. It's only been in the past couple of weeks that I've started to get into the openness again, and my mind is starting to look at a lot of things that I had blocked out. I'm sort of becoming aware of how and why I'm closing up, but still don't know why I have to block. I think it was because it's sometimes hard to handle all the stuff coming through Life Lab. All that is there for me and all of my potential and all the awareness available to me. I do know that a lot of other people feel the same thing sooner or later. The other night we were talking in our Peer Group about how people seem to get lost and then all of a sudden the whole thing seems to 'come in on them', and they say . . wow . . I finally found out what it's all about. They come in with all good intentions, accepting everything and all of a sudden, can't accept anymore for some reason, and right where and when they start seeing that Life Lab is really a "chance", and not going to be around too much longer for them, they think, now I am on my own, and I got to wake up again and figure out where I'm coming from and where I'm going. That's what happened to me, and I feel like I'm just starting all over again.

I think people just have to pause to question and digest what they are going through in Life Lab because it's so different from the way they live their day to day life, and from the way they have been previously educated. The whole thing is so very different. When I first started Life Lab, I jumped into it thinking about the V.A. benefits, the couple hundred bucks a month, but after I got involved with the people and the methods, I began to loosen up and it was almost a religious compulsion to go out and tell the world about learning about myself and the new way I saw the world. I told friends and neighbors and they started coming to Life Lab. I have done a 180 degree turn since I started. It's had this effect on me and on a lot of people who understand that this can be something that is really different for you, if you allow yourself to go with it.

PART 7

PUBLICITY FOCUSES LIGHT ON THE LIFE LAB THAT IS, WAS, AND MIGHT BE

"We didn't want to tell you," Esther said when I rejoined the volunteer staff operating Life Lab, "but a *Miami Herald* reporter has been trying to reach you for a week. She wants to do a story about Life Lab."

"Oh, no."

"Oh, yes. Can you imagine the new recruits a story in the *Herald* might bring?" Esther laughed.

During the past months reporters from two community newspapers and a radio station had asked about Life Lab. In each case, I explained we were a tiny, experimental program. I told them I was afraid an article might bring more applicants than our creaky organizational structure could handle. In each instance, the reporters agreed to put off any publicity about Life Lab.

The new request was from *Herald* feature writer Janet Chusmir who asked if she could, at least, come down and look around. I invited her to our next circle meeting. Before the meeting, I told Tom the *Herald* might print an article about Life Lab. He was delighted with the prospect of good publicity for Downtown Campus. He just hoped, he added, we wouldn't be portrayed as a "bunch of beanbag hippies."

Suddenly, the 20 new beanbags we had just proudly purchased seemed like albatrosses around Life Lab's neck. We had finally gotten a room of our own to use until the new campus was finished. Inside the room temperary bulletin boards framed off our meeting area. Scattered beanbags were the only furniture. The bulletin boards were covered with notices, *Links*, and abstract drawings done by students in a recent fantasy workshop. Sometimes crowds of 70 to 80 people, including students and guests, filled the room sitting on the floor shoulder to shoulder.

Janet found us a half hour before our meeting was to start. I gave her a copy of our Life Lab description and a list of students and volunteer staff with their phone numbers.

"I hope you'll talk to as many students as you can," I said as I helped early arrivals prepare for the meeting. "Also, if you have time, go through a contract planning session yourself. See what it's like."

Janet did exactly that. She became a legend around Life Lab. She did everything but register. Periodically, students reported she had called them. Weeks passed. Then on Sunday, March 4, 1973, Janet's article, "*Life Lab: A New Way To Learn,*" was published on the front page of the Florida Living section of the *Herald*.

As soon as it arrived at the newstands Saturday night, my phone began to ring. More than a dozen students called to say, "Janet's article is in." I bought several copies at a Seven-Eleven Store. Sitting in my old Ford stationwagon where I had kept all Life Lab's student folders for more than a year, I read Janet's article. Janet had captured the spirit of Life Lab. For the first time, I thought, it's been described.

It also occurred to me that the picture Janet so accurately portrayed soon would become the "good old days" that no "new days" could ever live up to. The history of Life Lab had been one of constant change, and I knew it wouldn't stop there. That night I wrote a response to Janet's article which I called, "The 'Life Lab' That Is, Was, and (Maybe) Will Be."

Janet's article and my response follows.

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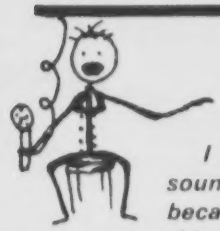

I think that when you first get into Life Lab, you're leary of it, and it sounds like a rip-off. Then you get into it and you gain all this enthusiasm because you're getting a chance to see what it's all about, and you say, hey, this is fantastic. But then you go out into the world and you try to express what it is all about and everyone says the same thing you said when you got into Life Lab, . . what a rip-off. Then I defend it, but at the same time, start to question it in my own mind, and I think this is where my own block came in. You start by saying that this is a rip-off, and haven't really accepted the fact that one can learn through every day living, and then sit down and take credit for something that everyone else can take credit for too because we're all 'watching the same movie'. And all of a sudden you're tired of explaining about what Life Lab is trying to do, and tired of trying to find out for yourself and trying to believe that you can really do it and how great it really is, and you just give up. But, then at other times, it comes back to you like right now, I'm really trying again to tell you that it really works, and it really hurts all over again to explain how people say, hey, what are you doing, when they see you writing in your journal or doing the logs or doing research while they are just sitting around talking. They say, what are you into, and you start to explain it and you find yourself closing up because you know there is no way in hell that you can say, hey, this is what it is. They can't understand and say how neat it sounds, and what a rip-off. But it's more than a rip-off. There is something here that can't be picked up in a structured school anywhere. It's a kind of insight into yourself that most poeple have to pick up either in 'menopause' or when they are so frustrated and at wits end with the way life is and there is no where else to go and THEN the thing happens. The being aware and then the feeling of frustration of being too aware and then the blindness and then waking up and then .. maybe, you can put it all together and realize where it's all at.

One of my frustrations with Life Lab is that the learning never stops. In a structured school the professor says that on such and such a day you will be tested and you should read this and that and a day before the test or even the night before, you study the hell out of the text and you go in and take your test. In Life Lab, none of that happens, so there is no "after" a test when you can actually let go and take a rest. There is no time off, especially from the journal. I really get frustrated with my journal. Here you are saying, what am I going to write in my journal today . . let's see, I got up this morning and drank a cup of coffee and you know what you don't want to write this shit . . . you want to say something that is important and meaningful and you want to be able to find how you feel about getting up and drinking that coffee and every once in a while you look at it and say that it isn't worth a damn and what's the matter with me . . .

The Miami Herald
Sunday, March 4, 1973

Life Lab a new way to learn

By JANET CHUSMIR
Herald Staff Writer

It was one of those busy Tuesday nights at Life Lab.

Kanaan Kassab, who's more at home at Sinbad's Clam Shell Restaurant, which he part-owns, was trying to capture the attention of a tall, skinny man.

He was having a frustrating time.

"I'd been told," Kassab recalls, "that Dr. McGregor Smith Jr., the director, was the guy who'd explain everything about Life Lab. He was between showing films and having a meeting. So, I was running after him. He seemed to have something else on his mind.

"THEN HE looked at me and he said, 'Kanaan, I can't tell you everything about Life Lab. You have to find out for yourself.' "

Kanaan Kassab found out that Life Lab is a self-directed learning program at Miami-Dade Junior College's Downtown Campus where he could earn an associate degree that would be counted toward the bachelor's he wanted in accounting.

He also found out that in this program they believe that no matter what his vocation, it's important for Kassab to understand Kassab.

For the first time in his life he was encouraged to explore not only his social and physical environment but himself and his values.

It was not easy.

"I WAS 30 years old and never before Life Lab had I opened myself to anybody else. I was 30 years old and I felt like I was going to explode."

And now?

"Life Lab turned me upside down and changed the whole character of my life. My explosion is calming down."

To each of the 70 students, from all

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And one day you really get into writing and it's a real freak-out, like the morning I was driving down I-95 and I realized just how beautiful it is and I looked down over the city for the first time that I ever remembered, and seeing all the trees and saying, what the hell . . Miami is really beautiful . . and I'm saying look at all the trees, it looks like a green forest. What is this..what's happening..and I can write and I can know. And then I realize that at other times I don't seem to have the energy or something because I see the same trees but it's not anything near as beautiful as it was on that day. And now it's every day since then, going through the realizing that I am not in the same 'place' I was last week or yesterday or 2 hours ago. I'm down and then I'm up, and I know how fantastic it is to be so aware and then come the times when you just want to quit, you just want to say, let me out, I don't want this anymore. Life Lab just brings this out in you . . the 'process' just forces it to happen so you can be aware and it isn't easy. They say, hey, why don't you get to know yourself and take the time to look at yourself, and sit down and try to figure out what you really learned today, what you really felt today. I used to get into trips like this before Life Lab, but they were few and far between and I would forget between times. And here I do it each day and it's hard when you have to but you don't really have to. There's a kind of drive behind it to find out what you really are and how it can be for you, and you have to do it each day because each day is a whole new trip.

Yeh, it's not easy. It's easier if you don't have to decide for yourself whether something should be done. And even if you want the open structure of Life Lab, you still want someone to tell you what you should do. I guess what Life Lab gives you is a motivation to go out and experience life on your own, and one of the things that helps is when you know that a lot of other people are experiencing their things along with you. Look at the fear most of us had when we got into Life Lab. I think it's because we never learned in a truly personal way. We never felt that the learning belonged to us. It always belonged to our parents in the form of grades, and to our teacher, who judged our intelligence. All that trying to please others. I just wanted to get by.

I know Life Lab is teaching me how to look at the world. These peer groups help express what we are seeing, feeling and learning. I'm bringing people to Life Lab, we all are. If they become students, they find that they best communicate what they think is happening to them, in their peer groups . . . and in seminars. And they are all saying why is it so hard to talk to other people and explain what is happening here. If I go outside and I start expounding on what I'm doing and where I'm at, people look at me and say, you're kinda weird. I know we all run up against this. How many people do you meet that are really interested in what you are doing? I've had 20 people up here and 2 of them have joined. The other 18 are still looking and saying, that's weird . . and what is all of this . . these people are crazy. I've had them in my peer groups and we've gone out afterward for a drink, and this one girl said, I wouldn't talk that honestly with my mother. And another told me that he never ever talked that straight with his priest. So I mean that when there are so many different areas we are involved in, and talk about, and think about, it's difficult to make people understand

Continued From 1F

walks of life, enrolled in the program, Life Lab is a different thing. Like its yellow, green and orange beanless bean chairs, which are for tape listening, film-watching, image-sharing and sleep-catching, the program is flexible and adaptable — contoured so that a motivated and self-directed student can find his own comfortable place.

Kanaan Kassab
. . . 'explode'

For those people who are used to filing into a math, English, philosophy or sociology class, where a teacher tells them what to do and when it's due, Life Lab — like life — can be a shock.

Smith and staffers try to cushion it. But they don't try to eliminate the confusion that greets a newcomer when he enters that room on the ninth floor of the Chamber of Commerce Building filled with beanbag chairs and lined with cubbyholes containing tapes, bibliographies, notices and students' publications.

Must Know Something

STUMBLING blocks, Smith explains, are part of the screening process. "Most who enroll in Life Lab have done it in spite of us."

John Rymer, 43, a methods analyst at Florida Power & Light, says, "The difference is that usually you sign up for a course and say, 'Educate me. Here I am.' At Life Lab, you say 'Here I am. I have to educate myself.' "

That's a big difference and one that's difficult to accept when you're used to being "educated" by someone else.

John Rymer
. . . do it yourself

"Nobody ever tells you that you can do something yourself," Rymer says. "Even on the job they say, 'We'll train you.' Nobody believes you can train yourself."

RYMER IS working toward a degree, "so somebody can say I'm educated and therefore I must know something."

In the process, he's found Life Lab, "The only place I know of from my going to and fro on this earth where people who're maybe millionaires and people with absolutely no money are accepted for what we are.

"If you don't accept people as people, Life Lab sure turns you off. You can't wait to get out of the place."

He's particularly impressed with the people "who are quite talented and trying so hard to help each other. Some of them — long-haired, unshaven, barefoot people — are so articulate and they devote their whole life to helping others.

"YOU CAN'T help but say to yourself, 'Boy, is there something else besides getting up at 7 and going to work?' "

He thinks about how he'd now feel free to call up these students and resource people to ask for help with something. And how people hesitate to really talk to the people they've worked with for years.

He thinks about the ones who dropped out because they needed someone to monitor them or because the program wasn't what they were looking for. And the ones who stayed and got involved with yoga or religion or volunteer work in a prison or drug clinic or hospital.

But most of all, Rymer and fellow students, like Peggo Cromer, a photographer, think "learning is fun." Peggo, who sometimes listens to the tapes while working in her darkroom, enjoys the "one-to-one" relationship with the speaker and the fact that she can replay the tape if she wishes.

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And then what really blows it all off is when you get to meet other Life Lab students. After 5 minutes of talking, you realize that you're not alone in the way that you see things, and the enthusiasm is all there and you can really sit down and rap. And you say, My God, there's 900 people who do the thing and understand about what you're going through, and who are dealing with it too. And you say, I'm not a nut after all, and you find so many people that you really dig, and you can really care for them. Some of them are different from your family and friends or anyone you ever met before and you get a different attitude, and you find that you can talk about everything, anything at all.

At the age of 31, I was at a point where I pretty much felt I've been through everything and then I got into Life Lab and then I found out that the person who lived through all 31 years is not necessarily one and the same with who I am now. The difference was that I was becoming aware that I was the one that was becoming aware. Because I just couldn't believe that I was doing what I was doing and thinking about the things I was thinking about. I wasn't just watching news on T.V. anymore, I was involved in a dissecting of people and problems and solutions and everything that was involved in the news, and behind the news. It wasn't just a movie, or a play or even just a commercial . . it was somebody saying something, and the way they were saying it, and why they were saying it. Phillips Petroleum had the most dynamite commercial a few weeks ago and I'm so glad that I was in Life Lab, because otherwise it would have passed me by as just another commercial. It began under a tree and a small boy was folding a paper, in America, of course, and you see him packing his papers and the narration says that he is a businessman and he owns his own business and he makes more than 1 / 2 of the population on earth. And I sat there during the entire program and I didn't even know what it was because I was being this paper boy. That was some awareness. And from that single statement, a lot of other thoughts came around like wheat deals and 'I can trade you this if you trade me that' and an entire spectrum of different concepts evolved. I started relating back to the fact that this is a pretty goddamn good place to live even with all of the problems and the crap. You know, there are several offices that overlook the Grove and Downtown Miami and the bay and the blue water, and I can go there in the morning and really get enthused. No matter how many no's or objections I'll get all day, it'll be just like a 'piece of cake'. This is definitely the rip-off, and what rips off is the shell that you have around you that protects you. A false protection - a conditioning. I know that I'll be different and see differently and think differently 5 months from now. I am aware that what happens to a person in Life Lab is exactly what happens to you in life.

Curious, Open-Minded

SHE LIKES listening to many points of view — "Even Angela Davis — instead of sitting in a classroom and listening to one teacher's biases."

Peggo Cromer
. . . one-to-one

But, as Rymer puts it, "Life Lab is not for most. You have to be pretty curious and pretty open-minded to accept it."

Most of the concepts of Life Lab have been kicking around for a long time. Now they're an idea whose time has come or is coming in various forms on various campuses around the nation. The catalyst is the growing dissatisfaction with the expense and structure of conventional educational programs.

At Miami-Dade, Life Lab grew out of Smith's doctorate at Union Graduate College which concentrated on the development of a self-directed learning program.

ENCOURAGED by some administrators, shaped by some of the students who participated in it, and still evolving, Life Lab has come to, he thinks, "a viable state" in less than two years.

Within the program, the philosophy is that when you're allowed to search for your own answers — without being locked into the traditional separate academic courses — you end up with a better emotional and intellectual comprehension of the whole. And you gain knowledge and insights that are more relevant to your own needs.

Students are encouraged to learn job skills through on-the-job apprenticeships and through experts in the field. They make their connections with people within the program and with resource people in the community who give support and help.

It's reconized that even though they're all students, restaurateur Kassab, systems analyst Rymer, photographer Cromer and others have a great deal to offer those students who want to learn their specialties.

Jobs, Skills Change

LIFE LAB also takes into account the fact that people change jobs and that the skills needed for a job also change. Priority is placed on self-understanding, choice making and continual development. The emphasis is not on memorizing data and practicing abstract skills.

Journalist-turned-educator Smith defines his own role as "designing the interface between the experimental and the reality of systems as they are now."

The junior college intends to serve students, but feels the tools aren't sufficient — "Or else Life Lab wouldn't exist." So he respects their need for registration and for documentation of studies and accomplishments.

A student entering the Life Lab program begins with a curriculum planning document. He lists his academic credits and the non-academic learning experiences he believes should be counted such as workshops and seminars, travel and perhaps hobbies or on-the-job training and volunteer experiences.

THEN he analizes his needs and goals and meets with staff programmers to work out a study contract.

Some students find that signing the contract makes them feel a greater sense of responsibility for achieving what they've promised to do.

They promise to take a minimum of three Life Lab courses (three credits each) and a maximum of five courses each semester. The courses are not usually in classrooms. Instead, students are expected to participate in small group discussions and workshops, and to listen to and evaluate at least 10 and up to 50 tape cassettes of talks by authorities in various fields.

On top of that, they're expected to see films, read and evaluate two books or selected periodicals per course, and skim the conventional textbook.

Plus, they're to work on individual projects such as volunteer tutoring of underprivileged children or helping in the Dade County Jail. Or they may do individual research projects, apprentice with an expert, or submit some learning experience from their own job.

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You can be an individual without involving your family or your employment. You don't have to have the classification. You can work for 1.50 an hour, you can do whatever you want and you'd still be an individual. When you get into yourself, you don't have to say, hey, I'm not part of a Union, or I'm not this or that, you know within yourself that you are an individual, and you don't have to make a lot or little in order to be yourself. That you can do your thing your own way. This is what Life Lab tries to show you. What you do for yourself is to find out where you're at and what you can live with and what you can't live with. And you start living with yourself and being your own person and find out what you really want. Nobody in this room can tell me about individualism. When I go up to my wife and kids and say I'm an individual and I can't hack this particular program we live . . I'll provide for you but I'm going my own way because I have to right now, that's being an individual. I'm not condoning or condemning where that's at. That is me as an individual and I'm not placing any responsibility on anyone but myself. I was not aware of anything but diapers, grocery shopping on Saturday, a job to pay the car payments and the house payments and the bills, until I learned about myself. And when I learned about myself I completely went berserk, and I am aware that the end results may be an absolutely fantastic thing, and that all the changes are not grounds for divorce. They are grounds for learning about one individual, me. My wife is going to start Life Lab because now she wants to know what the hell is going on down at the Downtown Campus.

I haven't changed outwardly, but inwardly I have changed values and conceptions about myself. My responsibilities have not really changed at all. I am totally responsible for my family and I have no intentions of avoiding that particular responsibility. But I also have a responsibility to myself that I didn't realize, because I was a miserable SOB quite frankly, because I was being put into a mayonnaise jar and the lid being screwed down tightly and I don't know if any of you've ever been in a mayonnaise jar, but it's really bad. It really is. The reaction is bad and it makes for a miserable time and place. So that's why I kinda' unscrewed the top and then eventually began to put my hands up over the rim and pull myself out and walk around and say, hey, there is a lot going on out there that I would like to experience. I need to experience because I have never done anything in my whole life. I, as an individual, have never had the opportunity. I went from parents to a commanding officer to a wife and I mean there is no difference between your old man and your commander and your wife. I'm 32 years and and I've never been able to say I'm not coming home tonight . . . I'm gonna' stay away and just sleep out on the bench or something like that.

Much More Is Required

ALL IN ALL, much more is required, the students say, than when you take the conventional course.

Life Lab students, like those in other programs at Miami-Dade Junior College, must complete 60 credit hours in various subjects in order to earn the associate degree.

However, they don't take any final exams. Instead, the Life Labber works with his staff programmer as he goes along. The number and length of their meetings vary according to the student's needs.

It's the staff programmer who checks on the documentation the student offers to prove that the learning experience is taking place. This documentation is presented in many forms such as logs, in-depth study workbooks, book reports, evaluations of tapes and films.

TO EARN the credits, the student must convince his staff programmer and Dr. Smith that he has completed the requirements of his particular contract and has gained substantial theoretical and practical knowledge in the subject matter.

Elsewhere, education takes place in a classroom, at a specified time and with a specified group.

"At Life Lab, Smith says, education takes place any time and any place."

That concept is not universally accepted. What is accepted is the standard procedure wherein you read chapters 5, 7 and 10 for a quiz on March 14. If you get an A, you and society think you're a notch further along although maybe you're not able to apply what you've learned.

"What education becomes," Smith says, "is accumulating brownie points. Success is figuring out what the teacher wants and giving it back."

Effective, Satisfying

ALTHOUGH that's effective and satisfying for some people, a lot of potentially creative people don't adapt or question what that system means to them.

At Life Lab there's an alternative. It's not THE alternative. "No way is THE way," Smith says. "There's a place for everything."

Dr. McGregor Smith Jr.
. . . 'find out for yourself'

A student must be highly motivated to succeed at Life Lab. "There's no one riding you, grading you. You have to make it yourself," says Danny, another student.

Ironically, Danny (not his real name) was a high school dropout. He came to Life Lab via the self-directed studies program in the stockade where he served time for possession of drugs.

NOW HE'S trying to earn a pardon from the governor. He wants his civil rights back and he figures a diploma will help show he's a productive member of society.

Millions of lifestyles away from Danny, in her lovely Coconut Grove home, wife and mother Mary Hanratty finds herself motivated by other things.

"I felt curious about the things I was hearing about," she says. "I wanted to touch them. I didn't know how."

At Life Lab, she found the books and tapes that were familiar and safe. "You could sit in a room and read or listen."

AT LIFE LAB she also found seminars and workshops and lists of others throughout the city. Living Dying, Yoga and Meditation, Experiments in Motion Graphics, Ethics and Business, Great Decisions in Foreign Policy Today . . .

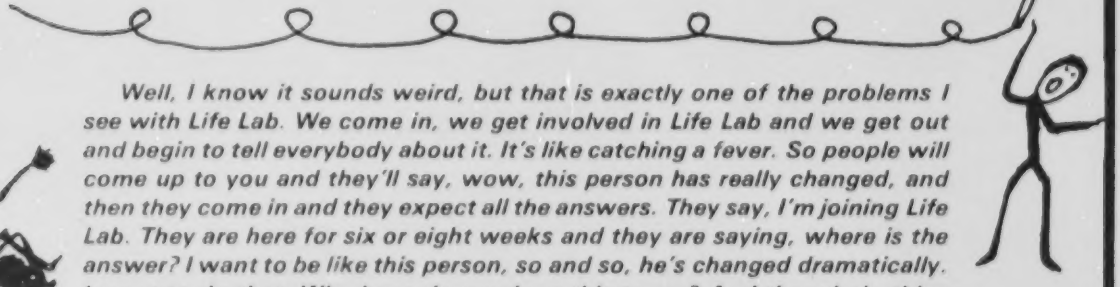
"So many things are available," she marvels. "You can take what you want or back off."

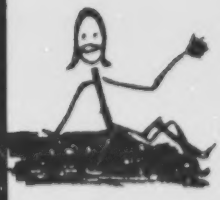
She's taking body movement awareness with Poldi Orlando and she's working in a neighborhood school and getting credit for that.

She's touching the things she used to hear about.

She's on her own, but not alone.

And now things have changed. I realize that I've been conditioned not to learn, and I find that even when I'm not in school, I'm learning. Each day I'm learning something . . whether I walk into a john and an old drunk is laying there over a toilet or rapping to hitch hikers . . . I say, hey, old man, you know, I sell insurance, what do you know? . . . and to the hitch hikers I can say . . where you goin'? . . . and he'll tell me and I can say and feel - man, that's really great, you've been this and you're going there and that's cool and if it isn't too far out of my way, I'll go ahead and take him where he's going. And he's telling me all about what he expects to find when he gets there, and occasionally I even get invited in to see what's happening. I've learned so much about me as an individual. It's not exactly psychology, anthropology, humanities . . I can't really say whether it is none or all of those. But I can finally communicate with myself. Quite frankly I surprised myself and I answer quite intelligently most of the time. It's unbelievable that this has happened, and that I'm getting into this thing about Life Lab, and the individual and the communication between the individual and himself and then to others, even people who may not be there. That is the challenge. This is what's happening, and I'd like to be able to sell Life Lab to people who don't know anything about it. I really would.





Well, I know it sounds weird, but that is exactly one of the problems I see with Life Lab. We come in, we get involved in Life Lab and we get out and begin to tell everybody about it. It's like catching a fever. So people will come up to you and they'll say, wow, this person has really changed, and then they come in and they expect all the answers. They say, I'm joining Life Lab. They are here for six or eight weeks and they are saying, where is the answer? I want to be like this person, so and so, he's changed dramatically. I want to do that. Why haven't you done this to me? And the whole thing with Life Lab is that you gotta' come in, you gotta' get involved, you gotta find out what it's all about and how to make it work for you. And it might take you two weeks or 3 semesters and you still won't have the answer, or you might just be getting part of one and you've got to just keep going from there. Don't come in and expect to find any answers because there are no answers here unless you find them yourself. You've got to find the questions first. Nobody's gonna' say hey, here they are written out from 1 to 10. They're not here.

Yeh, There are no such answers hanging around less you develop the eyes to see them, and I still say that if a V.A. benefit student comes in and stays for more than a semester then he's hooked. He might have come for the money at first but then like it or not, he's learning and knowing it. He may not even want to know more, but he is and there's nothing he can do about it. And then he's going to be telling all his friends about it and going through the same personal crisis that everyone else does, and he's going to find out that he's going to survive them, and learn more than he ever imagined by doin' it. You won't hear them calling it a rip-off, you'll hear them saying instead, hey, let me out of here . . . this frustration is more than I can handle. He's going to be dealing with integrity and with his new eyes.

THE "LIFE LAB" THAT IS, WAS, AND [MAYBE] WILL BE

(A response to Janet Chusmir's *Miami Herald* article on Life Lab.)

TO: All Participants in Life Lab
FROM: McGregor Smith

If there were one goal I most would like to see Life Lab achieve, that goal was best described by Janet Chusmir in the last line of her article about Life Lab when she said a student was:

> **"*...on her own, but not alone.*"**

As a matter of fact, if there were one goal we could achieve in society, I think that being "on one's own, but not alone" should rate a very high priority.

I have just read Janet's article. Now I'm attempting to do what I urge others to do -- process the experience. It is always a good learning experience for me to see anything I'm deeply involved in through someone else's eyes; especially if that person is a sensitive and skilled communicator, as Janet is. It also stirs up a mixture of strong feelings in me -- excitement, anxiety, hope, trepidation. And while I am still into these feelings, I want to share some thoughts with you, along with a copy of Janet's article.

In describing Life Lab through several students' eyes, Janet seems to me to have better described the essence of Life Lab than I've done in dozens of documents. In addition to the "on your own, but not alone" theme, she focused on John Rymer's beautiful definition of Life Lab as NOT a place where you say: "Here I am. Educate me." But, rather, a place where you say: "Here I am. I have to educate myself."

I finished reading the article with a clear picture, for me, of what Life Lab is, was, and ought to be. But if I had to put into a couple of phrases the essence of what I learned from this reading-and-thinking process, it would be:

> **I have a sharper awareness of the *constancy* of change, the *immediacy* of history, and the fantastic amount of energy we often waste resisting these "facts of life" by trying to keep things the same.**

It also occurred to me that this essential need for change was an important part of what I was trying to communicate in my "personal memo" to you 2/11/73. Some other things that came into my mind were the ideas of Dr. Ira Progoff on the "death and rebirth cycles of life" and on "process meditation"; along with notions of Jung which provided the seedbed out of which Progoff's ideas grew.

From this perspective, it became clear to me that even Janet's fresh and timely reporting was history. In a sense, there is no way to "tell it like it is" because we can only "tell it like it was," and this creates a serious dilemma (or riddle) we must all solve.

The dilemma, as I see it, is that in order to understand anything we must periodically state in some form or another "what is" as best we can. The only way

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You know how we learn? We learn because you and I find out where our integrity is. And it's not the facilitator or the teacher or the peer counselor or anything else like that. All of a sudden you know, hey, I can't rip-off myself. I'm gonna' do more work and get into my journal and start to look for the learning and start thinking about possible goals and finding out about the hidden agendas in my life and you start looking at things differently. And that's how we learn. Because there is no one else to take the responsibility.

You know the thing I'm thinking is that what we are learning at Life Lab is coming naturally to us, in fact, we are getting credit for things that are natural to life, in life, the learning experience, the awareness we are talking about. The ability to see things as they are, and learning to live as who we really are, we are getting credit for. Now in our society it would be an unbelievable thing if everyone accepted this kind of awareness as a basis for education. We could learn about the man, the feelings, the experience, the environment, the options for survival, and start an education from there. Our existence would be valid because we could believe in our own experience and exploration and we wouldn't need teachers or institutions to validate who we are. It would be the way children would grow up and by adulthood it would be a normal course of things.

I feel that the individual is an almost forgotten thing now-a-days. Life Lab and groups like it are the strokes that make the difference because they pull people out of the herd in the corral into an opportunity to be an individual and learn about themselves. They begin to find out what they already know, and what they need to know in order to fulfill their newly found goals. They begin to realize their potential as an individual. They come here tired with life and say that even though this all comes under the disguise of education, maybe I can find myself, maybe I can find new meaning, maybe I have value after all. They don't even know that that is the most relevant education of all, and that's where life really starts.

I know that I enjoy coming to Life Lab. I enjoy being very aware and learning all the stuff. It gives me doubts and I get frustrated but I enjoy this. Why can't we have Life Lab after the 2 year degree? Then after the 4-year degree why can't we continue in Life Lab? I could even do this without credit, but it's also nice to know that there are credits for the learning. Why not be 95 years old and have 20,000 credits?

we have to know anything is to use our minds, our cameras, our books, our religious doctrines, our newspapers, our memos, our tape recordings, our laws, our imaginations, etc. to regularly take momentary snapshots in time. The problem arises out of the fact that the very moment after we state "what is" it becomes "what was." And the next "what is" can never be precisely the same in all ways as the last "what was." And, for me, much of the tragedy and sadness and the glory and joy of life flows from this fact.

It seems ironic, but in one way the better the job we do of stating "what is," the harder the job we have of living that statement down, of letting it die and of letting the next "what ought to be" be born.

There has not been a semester in Life Lab's short life that one or more students haven't reminisced with me about the "good old days" a couple of months ago. They usually wanted to know what they could do to make it like "it was" again. While I should know better, these encounters always wrench a sadness deep in my stomach -- because I genuinely like these students and share their dilemma and their wish (often with all my heart) that I could finish just one thing that I would remain satisfied with "as is." But when my heart and head (and whatever else there is to me) are working together, I get far more satisfaction (and peace of mind) from accepting each thing as "what was," and using this acceptance as a starting point for deciphering the next "what is."

Another help to me in this process is thinking about Harris' Transactional Analysis ideas in the "I'm OK, You're OK" theme. It helps me when I flip this into a time dimension and realize the deep truth that: "What was" is OK, "what is" is OK, and I'd go so far as to say "what will be" also will be OK. (At this point I go off on a Nikos Kazantzkis trip which is deeper yet.)

I guess all this is mainly to say that what Life Lab has been is OK, what is now is OK, but please con't expect it to be whatever it was tomorrow! It will be whatever we make it together, and in the sense that it will be the best we're able to do in that moment in history, that will be, for me, OK too.

Love and peace.... Mac

PS: If you're interested in digging deeper into some of these notions.

*Progoff: Life Lab tapes 5054, 5035, 5121, and books such as Jung's Psychology and Its Social Meaning," "Depth Psychology for Modern Man," The Symbolic and the Real" etc. (Garret Publications, N.Y.)

*Transactional Analysis: "Born Free" by James & Jongeward, and publications from Transactional Pubs, 3155 College Ave., Berkley, Calif. 94705.

*Kazantzakis: "The Saviors of God: Spiritual Exercises" (Simon & Schuster) and dozens of other books, etc.

Dear Belle,

When I met you at the hall as I arrived at Life Lab and you invited me to join your clay working class, my first inclination was to refuse. I did not particularly feel it would be something interesting for me. I have never felt the desire to work with clay. But there was nothing else going on at the time, and your invitation was rather nicely made, and as I am more receptive these days than ever before to new experiences, I decided to accompany you and see what came out of it.

Your approach was unusual and quite new for me, and to be perfectly honest, I thought it was "far out." Who ever heard of working with anything, no less clay, in semi-darkness? You told us the clay was a living thing, that we would be working with a living object and to treat it as such. Little did I suspect that the living object I would be working with was myself ...

I decided to try to make a rose, as I was feeling very good and happy and felt like smelling roses. As my hands worked at forming the petals, I felt myself transported out of that room and into the private place called ME. Every petal became a thought, a memory that sometimes became painful to recall, my own dreams, past and present, my urge for creativity that has been fighting for years to be expressed and did not know how. It would be so easy to blame circumstances, or other people who did not understand this urge of mine and discouraged it, other obligations or responsibilities....but it would be dishonest of me. I have lost out on a beautiful part of me because of procrastination, indolence and lack of courage to fight the odds against me! I felt so ashamed and angry and sad to have permitted this to happen.

Than the petals changed from self recrimination into good feelings. They were symbolic of all the changes in my life these past months. Each one represented an achievement, an experience that had left its mark, good or bad, a step forward in the path of a better and a happier life for myself.

The finished rose was myself, it had been formed by the petals of my own thoughts and experiences. I could color it any color of the rainbow, make it beautiful or ugly....smell it's fragrance or make it odorless, allow it to remain a rose or smash it to bits with my hand! The wonderful thing is that it is up to me to decide what I want that flower to be!

I felt overwhelmed with emotion and had to leave and try to get all these feelings straight, and down on paper. It is not often we get a real glimpse inside ourselves and I wanted to keep it always fresh in my mind.

Years ago, I joined a ceramics class. At that time we were given instructions on how to "make things." You, my dear friend, did not teach me to "make" anything, but to find that which is always present inside, ready to come out, if we could only let it.

ELINOR GUTTMAN

LOVE, BELLE AND STUDENTS

Belle's class is a learning experience in developing one's inner self. This experience gave me a channel for releasing pressures mounting up from personal life experiences. What a relief to create something full of concentrated feeling once more.

I took the clay in my hands, felt the consistency with my fingers....my palms...concentration, meditation. I feel the life is emanating from the earth and suddenly there is pressure and the earth begins to take form. My eyes closed, and feelings emanate from the core within.

Love, frustration, fury-understanding, passiveness, agression-mixed -- a whirl wind of emotion...

My eyes open...what do I see? A formation, and I know who she is.

KAI SCHREMMER

This morning was a unique and beautiful sharing experience. Unique because this sharing was not of yourself with others, but rather, of yourself with yourself.

Thanks Belle, for giving us the material and the space, and most of all, thank you for allowing us to be us, and to be!

PAMELA NELSON

PART 8

A NEW "ADMINISTRATIVE ME" JOURNEYS WITH LIFE LAB INTO "WONDERLAND"

Janet's article did not bring the flood of new applicants we had feared. Apparently, experiencing this "new way to learn (as Janet termed it) through the tapes and tales of friends was a far more powerful attraction than publicity. Almost all our new students continued to be recruited by old students.

However, Janet's article did set in motion a new dynamic for all of us associated with Life Lab. Invitations came from television and radio stations to appear on interview shows. The following week Tom Fryer referred a call to me from Dr. Terry Kelly, assistant to Dr. Peter Masiko Jr., president of Miami-Dade.

"Life Lab is moving into another ball game," Tom remarked then, "I hope its beauty survives Big League play."

I had met Terry at committee meetings to plan an "Open College" program for Miami-Dade. Chaired by Dr. Robert McCabe, executive vice president of the college, the committee introduced me to a thick document entitled, *Academic Accounting System*. The educational philosophy of this document, written by McCabe, was very similar to Life Lab's. It proposed incentive systems to reward teaching that focused on student needs, and it encouraged experimentation with new roles for faculty and para-professionals. At Terry's suggestion, I had begun using its guidelines for each step in Life Lab's organizational growth.

When Terry phoned me, he had just returned from a trip to Washington, D.C. He told me he had read the *Herald* article about Life Lab on the way up. On the way back he read the guidelines from the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education for new grants they would offer to encourage innovative education.

"I couldn't believe it," Terry declared. "They could have been describing Life Lab's approach precisely.

"If you applied for a grant, Life Lab might be able to really expand."

"I'm not sure if a grant would be good for Life Lab," I hedged.

I had seen other grant projects flower and fade as soon as outside support ended. Terry didn't press the issue. He wisely suggested I pick up the Fund's material and read it myself. As I read it I became excited too. It was action-oriented like Bob McCabe's radical *Academic Accounting* document.

With Terry, I began planning a proposal to research Life Lab and develop support systems so its individualized approach could be extended to many more students - hopefully, without our management system breaking down as it had with each new spurt of growth in the past.

We eventually received a grant from the "Fund," and it, partly, is responsible for this book. Other outcomes of the grant will be described later. Months before our grant proposal was approved, Terry called me with "another opportunity for Life Lab."

He introduced me to Dr. Leland Medsker, of the Center for Research and Development in Higher Education at the University of California, Berkeley. Lee was conducting a year's research for the National Science Foundation on "New Institutional Forms for Extending Postsecondary Education." His team would study 18 innovative programs around the United States, ranging from Empire State and New York Regents External Degree Program to the University of Oklahoma Bachelor of Liberal Studies Program, The John Hopkins University Evening College, Minnesota Metropolitan State College, and California State University and Colleges External Degree Program. Lee wanted to add Life Lab at Miami-Dade to his list. We agreed.

We had just moved into the new Downtown Campus building when Lee and his team came for their first week's visit. We called an impromptu circle meeting. All staff and students who

COME AND BE WITH CLAY AND ME

Here's the clay.

See it - touch it - feel it - smell it - taste it --- don't!

This clay is organic like your hands. Let the energy flow back and forth from the clay through to you. **Close your eyes.** If you must think, think about the clay. Kneed it, bang it, throw it, roll it - make **your** mark on it.

After some time at your pace, open your eyes. What have you here? Like playing with clouds, what does that form, shape, line remind you of? What do you see in it? If no response, let it go and start anew - if something **is** there, a nose, an elbow, a prehistoric animal, a house, a tree, whatever --- refine it, be more specific if you so desire.

So much is beginning. Keep it going - alive. You alone can give it some life ---

and ad infinitum.

Re-evaluate your experience. How did you feel during and after your work?

This freedom I afford to you all who come is the same freedom I give myself.

Live it!

Belle Use it!

LOVE, BELLE AND STUDENTS

Dear Mac,

Just got home after our Tuesday Evening Peer Group -- the last of this semester. Must tell you what Life Lab has meant to us all tonight -- all of us have been **changed** because of our experiences here -- attitudes -- feelings -- thoughts -- ideas which in turn altered our lives and in turn will benefit us -- our families -- our environment -- and our relationships -- with each other -- within ourselves and everyone near us. Said Jerry Todd, "Life Lab has spoiled all other 'educations' for me -- I look and hear and feel with Life Lab eyes -- I know when I'm not learning in other classrooms -- when I have to parrot onto a test paper, not **what I think** about a subject, but what the professor said the book said."..."How fulfilled I feel," said Lee H. Dowling, "I **know** I did a good job -- I **deserve** the two A's -- something I never felt before -- I always felt I did not **do** enough for my grades. My attitudes are so different today." "I know I've grown," said Rena Stien, "I had no goal until now."

Oh, so much was said....revealed....spoken openly without fear....with the knowledge of being accepted, non-critical.

Life Lab has touched us all and I must say thank you for starting it all. You must have had **this** in mind when you realized what education - learning could be.

Bless you. I love you,

Belle

happened to be around joined us to find out what being a "case study" was like. Lee introduced his team: Stewart Edelstein, Hannah Kreplin, Janet Ruyle, and John Shea. He explained that as Life Lab director I would attend several national conferences with other directors, and we would collect various data for him. What the team wanted most, he added, was for us to go on with our functions as normal.

Jerry Mandina, who was spending his last month on our staff before taking another job, suggested we meditate a few minutes, then *do a circle*. We briefly described this *normal* Life Lab procedure to Lee, then we all lapsed into silence.

Next, all those in the circle, in turn, spoke their piece. In less than two hours the researchers obtained the broadest perspective imaginable of our hopes, fears, concerns, and goggle-eyed wonder at being studied by a research team. Jerry and Linnhe Moeller, two of our *full-time, part-time* staff members, shared their ambivalent feelings about leaving Life Lab. Both had job offers from Sam Baskin, president of the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, to work on his central staff at Yellow Springs, Ohio.

Linnhe explained to Lee that most Life Lab staff positions were part-time. Some part-timers carried a full load of 44 students and, thus, were considered *full-time, part-timers*.

As we did with Janet Chusmir, we gave the team a list of our students and staff with their phone numbers. The list now had climbed to several hundred students. As our *FTE productivity* rose, Tom Fryer had given us a budget for part-time staff. By the time Lee's team came, Tom had left for his new job as chancellor of the Peralta Community College District in California. Bill Stokes, who took over as vice president and director of the Downtown Campus, met with Lee too. Together, we planned our participation in the research project which would culminate in the publication by the University of California of a book, "Extending Opportunities for a College Degree: Practices, Problems, and Potentials." (For the full story of Lee's research, order the book from U.C. at Berkeley.)

It was Bill who really put Life Lab, so to speak, on Miami-Dade's organizational map. A strong supporter of student-oriented programs and a team approach by staff, he created a new academic division for Life Lab. As its director, I was, suddenly, officially, an administrator. Bill promised that we would soon have a real full-time staff with both professionals and para-professionals. Lee's team sat in with us as we tackled in circle meetings how to handle this exciting but traumatic new development.

The Life Lab *mutation* was maturing into an important branch of a larger bureaucracy, and there were dangers as well as advantages. We had part-time staff with Associate in Arts Degrees, with Bachelor's Degrees, with Master's Degrees, and with Ph.D. Degrees all working together as peers.

"If we've demonstrated anything," Kim Porter told the team, "it's that degrees don't matter. That's the beauty of Life Lab. You can't use credentials as a crutch. Whoever has skills and can help students direct their own learning has a place here."

Kim was credentialed to teach in four disciplines, had a Ph. D., and was a full-time Methodist minister when he obtained a leave to work for Life Lab. Kim's colleagues included others with Ph.D.'s, but they also ranged to school dropouts who were only now getting their A.A. degree through Life Lab.

> At that time, working on degrees ranging from the Associate in Arts Degree through Master's Degree were Richard Adams, Opal Cassidy, Betty Clark, Esther Colliflower, Al Conliffe, Carmen Cummings, Belle Gendler, Denice Gollwitzer, Pam Johnson, Bea Lippman, Alan McConnell, Al McClure, Nancy Ross, Heen Seidler, Bob Smith and Elyse Rapaport. Already holding Master's Degrees or Ph.D. Degrees were: Mike Brodsky, Don Bucklin, Jerry Brown, Juanita Brown, Darrel Clowse, Darwin Gearhart, Sue Goldman, Nathalie Hughes, Bob Hutchinson, Steve Liebowitz, Jerry Mandina, Linnhe Moeller, Sharon Thomas, and Norma Watkins.

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LOVE, BELLE AND STUDENTS

GLORIA GORDON

I've really cherished a graceful red-headed grandma on the sixth floor this semester. She's Belle Gendler and very involved with life. I've been attending her clay class on Thursday evenings. A small cluster of us work silently, in a high ceilinged room overlooking a view of Biscayne Bay.

Sixteen years ago I had some rapport with creative activity when I took some art courses at the Arts Students League in New York City. After the birth of my son, my life steered to other priorities, and I became more interested in snapping photos of my pink chubby baby, long walks with the stroller to the sand box, and keeping my Kew Garden Hills garden apartment and husband in order.

My interest in being a creative person has come back and I owe many good feelings about this to the three hours on Thursday night when Belle opens up her huge cans of natural clay and passes out old newspapers and massive chunks of clay mixed with the grog. There are very few art teachers, to my knowledge, that employ as creative a method as Belle. With few exceptions, teachers of most art forms, have little or no contact or interest in creating an atmosphere that allows for individuals to be really free. In Belle's class,we are even advised **not** to have a clear idea of our objectives. She never places a restraining hand on us, or on our work, but rather, favors what is open and original, even though it might be, technically wrong.

Clay is an extreme material. It is so flexible, that I've been tempted at times, to go beyond it's normal limitations; as a result, a few of my pieces, soon will dissolve and break. This is no daunting problem, for something else keeps emerging -- an unleashing of my perceptions, ideas and balance.

Belle's scale of values in art are never imposing; they are for me, a vital learning experience, and have added dimension to my "now."

In that big room on Thursday evenings where we mold, pound and even smell the clay, I am nourished! I express, speak, see and form. There are some hidden "me's" being revealed when the clay I am feeling begins to mature and resemble a personal creative achievement.

I have decided to continue working with Belle Gendler next term...classes this time, will be during the afternoon.

Pile of clay - what to do - Belle says go with it - clay organic - play with it until something suggests itself.

I beat, push, shove, knead and throw clay. Notice anger in my hands. Keep on going. Again and again clay falls in two pieces. Keep on going. Now I go with the two pieces - they turn into two dancers...

Then, bash it down again - this time it's a frog! Bash it down again - this time it's a cat, then a bearded man... Bash again and I throw the clay on the board and say, "To hell with it" and LO, AND BEHOLD! It falls into a form suggesting a reclining female. I go with it and it really reclines and seems to come to life in my hands. I work on and on -- it's very exciting NOW! Belle and I talk. Back to work. I like what I'm doing....

During this whole time I notice that my right hand takes over the work and I deliberately put my left hand to work. I notice that my left hand tires easily, has more "discovery" possibilities, is more sensitive and groping and is not as "trained" or "disciplined" as my right hand. I want to do more work with my left hand now.

The workshop ends for me when Belle and I wrap up my piece of work and store it for next session when I plan to continue with it.

JULIE R. BELL

It is like walking through an unknown area that is in total darkness and instead of being informed by your hands as you grope, you are being asked to invent your surroundings. I feel frustrated and yet glad to be experiencing a world that has not been pre-fabricated for me.

At this point, I am back in a play area where unformed being exists and the frustration is mainly that of a feeling I have "lost" something that would serve me here.

In general I am looking for a me that has long since been destroyed.

Thank you, Belle, for your imaginative introduction. Your exhilaration is infectious.

PAULINE

With our minimum budget, we paid the same honorariums to everyone, regardless of their credentials. Staff members were totally responsible for their own students. They made sure their students were registered, they untangled snarled records, and helped students develop study contracts, identify resources, satisfy documentation requirements, and turn in required contract Update Reports periodically. Also, staff members had to make sure grades were recorded in Miami-Dade's computer system. A *job description* document from this era indicated part-time staff should be competent to advise students on academic planning and financial aid, as well as able to edit and dub tapes, facilitate small group interaction, operate video equipment and movie projectors, and be skilled in *active listening*.

For our totally unreasonable expectations, we could pay only a pittance, doled out on a crass assembly-line system of so many dollars *per FTE*, paid when contract Update and Final Reports were turned in. Staff did much of their work at home, often meeting with students there, taking phone calls at all hours of the day and night.

Despite our unattractive terms of employment, creative and talented people from all walks of life devoted themselves to working for Life Lab. As the ranks of would-be students swelled, so did the applicants for Internships with our staff. The only avenue to becoming a poorly paid, part-time Program Advisor was to work one term as an Intern with no pay and no assurance of a job after that.

A basic tenet understood by all staff then was, *Don't Come To Life Lab For Security*. The only thing Life Lab could offer was what Fred Shaw would have called *A Calling*. In a document for Interns, this tenet was described as follows:

> "Life Lab can't offer you security. Explore its limitations and its possibilities, and see if involvement with Life Lab can further your own agenda - your life work. To the degree it can be a tool to help you achieve your own goals, to that degree it makes sense for you to become part of its working community. In that community you are assured of only one thing - you are an equal. You can use your full talents to whatever degree you show you are able."

As Life Lab gained full-fledged membership in the college community, we realized a new and unpleasant tenet would have to be added. Soon we would have job security for our new professional and para-professional positions. We would have a budget for part-time staff commensurate with that of other academic divisions at the college. Everyone would benefit in some way financially, as Life Lab was incorporated into what seemed to us the affluent and structured world of management.

Along with a measure of security, the unpleasant tenet was that Life Lab would lose a measure of its equality. Within the community, the fruits of its labors would no longer be evenly, though thinly divided. The pay scale for professional staff with graduate degrees would be 25% to 50% higher than para-professional staff and part-time staff. Since professionals presumably had more education and brought more expertise, this seemed fair. But in Life Lab, it was the part-time staff, predominately volunteer para-professionals, who attracted students in large enough numbers to create the *FTE base* that now justified full-time professional staff.

We dealt with this fact by facing it squarely, by not playing a game that it wasn't so. We once more reminded ourselves that if you worked in Life Lab, it was because it served *your* own

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in peer groups
students advise
and advisors learn
how to advise
students who are
learning how
to learn from
advisors who
are also learning
forever & ever...

AMEN

purposes, because it gave *you* a tool to do what *you* couldn't do elsewhere. That was till true. Our professionals and part-timers worked as true colleagues. They knew who they could thank for creating their own jobs. While Life Lab's system wasn't fair, neither was life fair. In our day-to-day jobs it was still people we valued, not credentials. What degree you had was not the measure of your worth, but we did intensify our campaign to help staff work on their own degrees so they could advance up our built-in career ladder.

In making this new transition, Life Lab's system creaked and groaned as usual, but it didn't collapse. During the period of trauma, everyone's fears, anger, hopes, and new dreams freely found expression in our formless, sometimes endless circle meetings. Then a new metamorphosis began to emerge. In a geometric spiral, Life Lab continued to expand. The momentum, the influx of new students, new demands, new possibilities rekindled the excitement of growth. Our morale and our energy rose to new peaks.

My new role as a *division director* was hardly confirmed when I realized I was no longer directing anything.

The newly created *administrative me* was catapulted into a *Wonderland* as remarkable as the one *Alice* discovered behind the looking glass. It was populated by other administrators, each with different powers. We moved across a chessboard of conference rooms and inner and outer offices. I discovered for the first time that the furnishings of each office signaled the rank of the administrator it housed. Territorial imperatives and justifying the demands for office space by competing divisions gave me a whole set of new concerns. S.I. Hayakawa, the semanticist, contends that every specialized group (whether they be gangsters, hippies, or administrators) develops its own specialized vocabulary that serves to identify fellow initiates and keep others out. True to Hayakawa's hypothesis, out of the mouths of us administrators flowed the specialized language of *administrese*. With it, I realized with a start, we ran the college.

We were the central nervous system. On crisp, typed memos, on dozens of forms, across interoffice telephone lines, through computer terminals our coded messages flowed ceaselessly. My task was clear: To learn the language, the code, to understand the flow well enough to link (but *not* lock) Life Lab's own light pulse beat to this powerful metronome heart beat. Translated into *administrese*, my job was to "create the *interface* between the *data needs* of a *cost-effective, computerized systems approach* and Life Lab's *alternative delivery system*."

A part of me remained deeply in Life Lab. There I sought frantically, not to direct, but to discern the nature of Life Lab's development. Alternately, my role was to define the boundaries of what Life Lab was and was not; but, more often than not, it was the students and staff who informed me, who taught me what Life Lab was becoming next. And more than director, I became the scribe, the chronicler, rather than the creator of the event.

Mostly, my chronicling was a lonely endeavor. I would wake from a restless sleep, pick up a pad and pencil I kept by my bed and shuffle to the kitchen for a snack. This was the time I wrote my own *Links*. It seemed important to share my feeling and the conditions shaping the thought processes themselves, so I would begin my *Links* with a *condition report*, a statement of the mundane, a glimpse into my own personal state, a humanizing counterpoint to the message itself.

Life Lab rapidly eclipsed our original *Self-Directed Learning Lab Program*. One or two self-directed groups perpetuated themselves and the members continued to take single courses and to meet on their own. But after Life Lab became a *division*, most of our staff worked with the growing numbers of full-time students who were organized into peer groups pursuing study contracts in Life Lab.

One *Link* I wrote during this restless period reads as follows:

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NORMA WATKINS

IN THE BEGINNING . . . .

I first met Mac Smith when we were appointed to Dr. Masiko's "Open College" committee. It was in the year 1971-72, my first year at Miami-Dade. We met in Dr. Mildred Bain's office. Mac outlined a bit of his philosophy: self-direction, life-long learning, the teacher as facilitator. I was excited. We decided to put it to use and I signed up for American Education in Transition, my first education course. I would earn the credit by reading in the field of "open college" learning, and by designing a model of my own. I read many articles and the Carnegie report on education, and tried to use them in our monthly Open College meetings. I don't know how much good my input did; the committee was one of those which met monthly for five months, then met no more. It existed and then it didn't. But I did meet Mac, which has been of infinitely more value and more use. I designed a model of self-taught English 121, the second semester of English Composition. I chose six students out of my first semester course and picked a bright sixteen year old early entry student named Susan Pope to be the facilitator. The group chose a time to meet, picked its own books, and within the department's guidelines (an introduction to literature and a research paper) their own goals. I met with them infrequently, but I saw Susan at least once a week and she would report to me on their process, who was having problems, who fantastic success. At the end of the semester the students evaluated themselves on tape. They found it exciting, even those who had problems with so much freedom. We were a sad group that last meeting. Susan, bright and glad, had died from an allergic reaction to sodium pentathol in the dentist's office. I think one of the marks of the group's strength was that they elected to go on without her. We felt proud of ourselves; we had peeled away the phony surface of college education -- the professor as authority figure and expert, the student as empty, unthinking vessel, the rules about time and place and content.

I was perhaps too heady with success. That small experiment had been done under cover of the Downtown Campus. I had used a Downtown Campus sequence number; the class was small; it went unnoticed. But, carried away by the proof of the pudding, I wanted to run a factory of English Composition and show how cost effective it would be. I had a grand, mild man as Department Chairman, who encouraged experimentation by not saying "no." He gave me a sequence number of my own and I recruited the class-to-be out of four first semester classes. I got fifty students and designed a handout for them called "The Freedom and the Responsibility." They would divide themselves into groups, elect facilitators and decide where and when they wanted to meet. I should have noticed the ominous silence in the English Department, but I am deaf to all but the literal, so I blundered merrily on, preparing, posting notices on my office door. One morning when I arrived there was a special departmental meeting called. I was placid. "It's about you," a friend said. "Me?" "Your course . . . that new course . . . they're very upset." I trotted along, feeling horrid, trapped. The meeting was grim. The department had thirty-five members at that time and all but seven or eight were traditionalists. They were incensed. If there were no professor, there was no class. That was obvious. If I felt the presence of a professor were unimportant, I obviously was not carrying out my proper function. If students could meet without a teacher and earn credit, where did that leave them? I answered and answered, and paraded my newly won philosophy, my small success. Soon it became obvious that no one would pursuade anyone of anything. A compromise was agreed upon. I could have my independent class for one semester but they must use the same materials and the same assignments as my regular classes. At the end of the semester, an objective third party would "test" both groups to see if the independents had learned as much.

LIFE LAB LINK...From Mac Smith

CONDITION REPORT

Milk tastes good, and the white cup is cold in my hand. I am writing this at 1:30 a.m. in the light cast from a bare bulb in the utility room. Before turning in I did Yoga exercises, meditated briefly and felt good because I could leave unfinished work piled on the ping pong table with my mind cleared. But dreams started my thoughts swirling again. The only way I know to break the cycle is to get up and write.

PURPOSE

I will try to define the Life Lab program which is now taking shape, which is in the process of finding its own bounds and is growing out of an extraordinary patch of freedom at Downtown Campus, which thrives only because of a remarkable climate of trust.

MAKING VISIBLE THE LIFE LAB PROCESS

Being a student in Life Lab means you have agreed to do something and you intend to think about what you are doing and evaluate what doing it means to you. You talk to a staff person about these intentions, and we call the agreement you make a *contract*. While the specifics may change when it makes sense to change them, the *process* goes on until the contract comes to an end. The completion of a contract is evidenced by the filing of papers and the key punching of credits into a computer. Contracts may end with finality and celebration, or they may pass imperceptibly into new contracts and new evaluations.

What does it mean to contract to *do something* in Life Lab? It might mean to read, to interview, to teach, to observe, to meditate, to paint, to excavate, to survey, to organize, to cogitate, to meet, to collaborate, to tutor, to entertain, to help, to fantasize, to share, to investigate, to report, to facilitate, to produce, to manufacture, to sell, to calculate, to figure out, to show concern for, to intervene, to plan, to represent, to set up, to increase skill in, to listen to, to discuss, to systematize, to share, to learn to, to clarify, to understand how, to test out, to mold, to dance, to relax, to express, to be at ease with, to make decisions about, to evaluate, to measure, to go, and to find out. Contracts usually contain many elements of doing, such as sharing, clarifying, reporting, reading, interviewing, expressing, teaching, deciding, listening, and evaluating.

In developing a contract, you must identify your own learning potentials. You also must identify activities and resources to fuse your potential and reality.

Life Lab is one thread in a pattern being woven by trusting places here and there, scattered, only now beginning to look for each other, drawing together, a loosely knit net growing stronger as there are more places where you can *do* your own education. We have written others in the network inviting them to provide more programs in Miami, expanding the options for Life Lab graduates. Already responding are several University Without Walls bachelor degree programs and the University of Northern Colorado's master's degree program. But to use these options, you have to hammer out your own contract and take responsibility for your own learning.

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We began the semester. I soon saw that it was hard to watch five groups, to keep in close contact with five facilitators as I had done with one. The students were young, just out of high school, and I selected them from the narrow range of my own classes. Some were in the class to assure themselves an easy passage through English. But we pushed on. A couple of the groups were terrific; they met in homes; facilitators and students were responsible and eager; I felt good about them. The other three were tentative. What did you do about absenteeism? How did you grade people whom you saw only once a month and whose only observable performance were a few papers? If a group did not work as a group, some performing and some not, could you in fairness reward some and punish others, when all had contracted alike? I honestly began to feel hopeless, that the project was unmanagable and doomed to failure. Finally it was over and the objective third party, Jean Ellen Majors, come in to administer the tests.

We had pre-tested my regular and independent classes by having them explicate the poem "The Ball-Turret Gunner." At the last meeting both groups again explicated the poem. According to our objective outsider, the classroom students learned approximately 22% more about poetic terminology and its use, and were therefore able to use these terms in their papers. No "affective" tests were given because English Composition had no goals in this area. No one mentioned my "failure." I did not offer to try again. The following evaluation, I think, fairly states the advantages and drawbacks to the course.

"This course to me had its good and bad. I liked it because we were able to pick our time for our classes to start, and if we were late we could still have a class. I have to admit though that we did not always stay the whole hour. We found ourselves with nothing to do after we discussed what we had to. I do not think I have learned much but I realize that it is my fault and that we could have made the class a whole lot more interesting and enjoyable. I did not enjoy my English 101 class last semester; it was dull and I did not learn anything. I do think that others should have a chance to take an independent class like this. But I believe we should be given more suggestions on making the class more interesting since not all of us are as imaginative as others. But I did like this class and I hope I have a chance to do it again."

My second experiment using Life Lab techniques in a traditional program was more successful. I asked skilled writers from English Composition classes to work six hours a week in the writing Lab in exchange for credit in an Advanced Composition class. Everyone benefited. The remedial students responded better to peers than to the sometimes awe-ful faculty who worked there. They felt comfortable coming to the lab; it was a relaxed place where they could talk to a friend about the problems they were having in class. The volunteer teachers learned as much or more than their students. They worked one-to-one, with students writing, then going over the products for mistakes. The formal aspects of grammatical errors (i.e., the parts of speech, the seven uses of the nominative absolute) were not stressed; instead the "teacher" would point out to a student that a sentence was awkward, or that in standard English, a thing was usually said *this* way.

If the volunteers liked their work and wanted to continue a second semester, they received credit in an Education course.

The lab worked better these semesters than any others during my time at South Campus. Times changed, divisions shifted, and the lab was moved from the English Department to the Division of Inter-curricular Studies. The "teachers" were once again professionals and students signed up for courses instead of wandering in for help. It was more "cost effective."

What are the morals from these two tries? Perhaps, in the first instance, that it is wise to stay small and invisible until you have built credibility; or to have protective support in high places; or to build into comparisons an affective factor. In the second instance, in a large institution success is no guarantee of continuation.

WHO TEACHES IN LIFE LAB?

We are finding out no one teaches in the formal sense. But much is involved in helping a group of students to find their own direction, to assume responsibility for their own evaluations, and to tap the resources of their own members. The person who does this is being invented now. The name of this person is a *staff program advisor*. Some skills of *staff program advising* are already part of the curriculum for *Life Lab Interns*. Thus, some Life Lab students, by interning, are creating a career ladder. They are designing their own jobs of the future. The jobs are already being written into the personnel manuals of the college as Life Lab creates its own niche at Miami-Dade.

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Like the *Red Queen in Alice's Wonderland*, I often felt I had to run as fast as I could merely to stand still in *Administration Wonderland* where I worked. Sometimes I would attend meetings and work diligently for days, then look back to see what I had done and how far I had come. The painful truth would be I felt I had done little of importance and I seemed to have come nowhere. In the meantime, Life Lab, like *Alice*, was directing itself at full tilt in many directions.

Darwin Gearhart, a Lutheran minister, a mortician and social science professor rolled up in one, joined Life Lab's staff. For a year he was to help me coordinate Life Lab's unpredictable growth. A few policemen transferred into Life Lab at Darwin's invitation. Three semesters later, Life Lab had a burgeoning LEEP program (Law Enforcement Educational Program) with more than 70 officers. Firemen, too, discovered our study contracts could accomodate their wildly varying work schedules.

In one year a fire captain, several lieutentants, and the police chiefs of Miami Beach and Riviera Beach were enrolled in Life Lab.

Our *Self-Directed Learning Labs* seemed dead until we received a letter from prisoners at the *Glades Correctional Institution* at Belle Glade about 70 miles north of Miami. Several who had been in one of Esther's self-directed groups while waiting for trial at Dade County jail wanted to set up groups of prisoners at Belle Glade. The prison's director and its education officer invited us to work with them. When we drove up to meet them, we took a box of tapes and enough forms to last, we thought, a year. A counselor for a traditional college program being conducted at the prison referred a few students he thought would benefit from a self-directed program. Our former students recruited the rest and began the program with one group of 10 prisoners taking *Human Relations*.

Bob Thomas, the prison's director, arranged for them to send forms and exchange tapes with us by mail. I forgot about our prison group until three months later Esther invited me to come to a Belle Glade prison seminar being held at Life Lab.

A prison van brought a group of self-directed students who also served as a traveling speaker's bureau. They attended a local Kiwanis Club luncheon, then came to Life Lab for their seminar. That's when I met John Cross, who soon was to become Life Lab's first full-time *lifer*.

John, a trustee, worked for Donald Lee Tankersley, an education specialist at Glades Correctional Institution. As soon as John discovered that in Life Lab it was possible to take up to five courses instead of one, he applied to become a Life Lab student.

"Our project will be to demonstrate the virtues of self-directed learning to the entire prison community," John wrote on his contract. "If you need someone with credentials to supervise our educational endeavors, you can count on Mr. Tankersley. He has two master's degrees and a genuine desire to help anyone who is incarcerated improve his lot."

John's description of Don Tankersley proved to be true. Born and raised in Belle Glade,

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LEAH CHASE

There are as many ways to the Life Lab as ...

Recently, I asked the *I Ching:* What is the Life Lab -- of what significance is it in my life, and in the life of the community? I threw the coins, and got Hexagram 47, Oppression (Exhaustion). "Times of adversity are the reverse of times of success, but they can lead to success if they befall the right man ... Externally all is well, one has meat and drink. But one is exhausted by all the commonplaces of life, and there seems to be no way of escape."

I immediately recognized in this context my state when I came to work as an Advisor at the Life Lab. I had been teaching high school English for a number of years, was exhausted, felt trapped by circumstances -- living alone with two children to support. Then a part of me cut loose: I resigned at a time when teaching jobs were getting very scarce. I rented my house, moved into the garage, and thus began a new chapter, a very creative time in my life.

The first thing I did with my new freedom of time was to read all the novels of D.H. Lawrence. Then I read the *Bible* -- every word. I remembered that Thomas Mann had written a novel about the Old Testament Joseph, and I read that three-volume novel. This, then, was what I needed ... time to replenish my cup. But, I also needed part-time work.

Fortunately, a friend led me to the Life Lab.

I have been an Advisor since the Winter of 1974, rescued by what the *I Ching* referred to as "help from a high place, a prince in scarlet knee bands (in ancient China princes were identified in that colorful way), in search of able helpers." The prince the *I Ching* spoke of is, of course, Mac Smith!

I remember that during my first trip to the Life Lab, I was casually introduced to Mac, and asked him if he had anything to do with the Life Lab--the ancient Greek sense of immortals as subject to irony and humor is not dead.

Six in the first line lead to Hexagram 58, The Joyous Lake: "True joy rests on firmness and strength within, manifesting itself outwardly as yielding and gentle. Truth and strength must dwell in the heart, while gentleness reveals itself in social intercourse. In this way one assumes the right attitude toward God and man and achieves something." Here I feel that the *I Ching* is describing Mac Smith.

"Knowledge should be a refreshing and vitalizing force. It becomes so only through stimulating intercourse with congenial friends with whom one holds discussion and practices application of the truths of life. In this way learning becomes many-sided and takes on a cheerful lightness, whereas there is always something ponderous and one-sided about the learning of the self-taught."

So, after a description of my needful state at the time I came to work at the Lab, the *I Ching* moves through a characterization of Mac as my rescuing prince, and finally refers to the Life Lab philosophy of education.

Dr. Patricia Cross, who spoke at the Community College recently, said that, historically, there had been a movement from schooling for the velvet only, to education for *all,* and finally to the contemporary direction, education for *each.* I feel that this last phrase expresses succinctly but fully the Life Lab position.

Don had come back to do *some good* at the state prison near his hometown. On subsequent trips we made to Belle Glade, he enthusiastically described how prisoners in the self-directed groups woke each other up on Saturday mornings, their only time to sleep late, in order to complete two three-hour learning labs with tapes during their free time. A cadre of four Life Lab prisoners each were managing one self-directed group taking either *Human Relations*, *Social Problems*, or *American Education in Transition*. John used the prison duplicating equipment to print response forms and logs for the groups. On his desk was stacked a neat pile of prison-printed Life Lab brochures.

"I don't want to lay any heavy recriminations on you, Dr. Smith," John said, sidling me into a corner on one visit. "But we feel it is entirely unjust to limit this program to our present proportions. Mr. Tankersley and I would like your permission to expand."

I explained that we had started the first group as an experiment so a few prisoners could complete a program they had started in jail back in Dade County.

"We were invited to come here," I said, "and as long as we're small, nobody probably cares. But if you promote this into a big deal, John, the fact we're outside our home county could cause trouble."

"I can't believe," John appeared genuinely incredulous, "that sectionalism could stand in the way of genuine rehabilitation. Last week three police officers from the outside came to see me for information about Life Lab. They're willing to study with prisoners, if that's what it takes to get in. Ask Mr. Tankersley."

Don confirmed that officers from the outside, as well as guards at the prison, were expressing interest in Life Lab.

"The wives of Highway Patrolmen and Sheriff's Deputies work here, and they've been taking John's brochures home," Don explained. "It's caused some excitement. I agree with John. These are good men, and it's not right to deny them a chance to advance themselves."

I agreed Don and John could start a small waiting list. At the beginning of the next term, I said I'd try to get permission to register them.

A few weeks later, Don telephoned me from Belle Glade. He had my list, he said, and the men already were buying the tapes they would need. But the director of the traditional college program at the prison was not happy with his plan, Don said worriedly.

"How many have signed up?" I asked.

"Fifty," replied Don. "We've limited it to law enforcement personnel only, or there would have been more."

My heart sank. I had little hope that such a big, out of county extension would be OK'd. Even if approved, I could not imagine how we could staff it. Our small Belle Glade operation had no budget, and Don served as a volunteer adjunct for our four Life Lab students there. He offered to work weekends and nights with the men from the outside.

"It's a matter of principle," Don said, his voice shaking. "These men are my neighbors. They're counting on me, and I can't let them down."

Don couldn't let them down, but we could. This time growth was our undoing, and our system collapsed. The reverberations shook the roots of Life Lab back in Miami. I received word from Bill Stokes that complaints against Life Lab had been registered with the Division of Community Colleges at the Florida Department of Education office in Tallahassee. We could complete only those contracts already made with prisoners. After that, we had to phase out any activities outside our county line. The adjacent counties were in the territory of other colleges. In a few weeks, Bill told me, Dr. Lee Henderson, Director of the Division of Community Colleges, would visit me to ask some questions about Life Lab.

I pondered our failure at Belle Glades, but there was no villain to blame. Somehow, I had let expectations of what we could deliver get out of hand. One regret I still feel keenly today is the loss of the friendship and respect of one of the most dedicated educators I have met, Don Tankersley.

39 our view

This consciousness of the importance of the individual is voiced by many seminal thinkers today. Carl Jung said that "Problems are never solved by legislation or by tricks. They are only solved by a general change of attitude. And the change does not begin with propaganda and mass meetings or with violence. It begins with a change in individuals. It will continue as a transformation of their personal likes and dislikes, of their outlook on life and of their values, and only the accumulation of such individual changes will produce a collective solution." And Solzhenitzyn: "The inner life of the individual and not the self-sufficing elements of some political order is the only solid basis for a social structure."

Responding to the cry of the individual -- unhappy, living as only a face in the crowd, pained and crippled within the education-for-the-masses system (which seems to want as a product a fast-moving consumer, de-sensitized to himself and to the world around him) an unconscious slave to the economic power machine -- the Life Lab says to the individual, "You yourself are even another little world and have within you the sun and the moon and also the stars." Your life and the world around you is your life-long learning place.

In the Life Lab, the emphasis at all times is on individual responsibility. The student makes his own study plan: for his short-range goals, for the competences that are to be achieved for a particular semester, and also for his life. (For this latter challenge, Mac Smith developed a reprint entitled "A Model-Building Method for Creating a Life-Long Study Plan.")

But then, as the *I Ching* said, knowledge becomes a refreshing and vitalizing force only when the truths of life are practiced with other people. Thus Life Lab encourages an awareness of the great variety of learning resources and activities available in the community. Advisors conduct weekly peer group meetings and classes with students. These activities are held at the Lab, at Advisors' houses, and in all parts of the city.

Sheldon Wolin, of Princeton, writing in the *New York Review of Books,* speaks of politics, but his words are quite applicable to the Life Lab: "New forms would mean not only new relationships of cooperation, but new locations, ones that will be centered around places where people actually live, work and learn. They must be ... grounded in everyday life, in the reality of working places, living places, and learning places, in the reality of people doing and de-pending."

I feel that the future of the Life Lab is to continue to work and develop through its primary philosophical drive to give an environment and a framework for the self-development of the individual. Questions such as how much is the Life Lab student learning in comparison with the student in the conventional system come after the question of HOW this learning is taking place.

Recent development of forms and basic structures of the Lab operate out of a sense that the new student very often needs some guidance through a perhaps awkward transition period between the classroom and independent study, but after this developmental period, the student should have the opportunity to be on his own to make his learning program what he wants it to be. He should be allowed to make his own mistakes, to experience the struggle toward a greater self-awareness and responsibility, a greater self-expression, a fuller trusting of the instuition, perhaps -- a feeling that his voice counts for something, and also an awareness that independence does not release one from giving back out of what one has gained, to the Life Lab and to the greater community, to offer one's critical support, to give feedback in peer groups and classes, to participate in community service activities.

Another dimension I can project for the Lab is for it to become a vital force in the community in such areas as local environmental studies and ecological activities. One way this might be effected is by the formation of a Life Lab Speakers' Bureau, which would draw on the varied talent available among the staff and students of the Lab. Also, there are several Life Lab publications in the planning stages, and this is another promising direction to work in. The future of the Life Lab is very open-ended, and the good work and times are just beginning.

Don's last letter to me concluded bitterly:

"I, for one, feel that it is a crime to withhold a college education from any person who desires it, and is willing to work for it. As I mentioned in my last letter, we have one person who has worked in law enforcement 18 years and now finds the opportunity to advance himself through Life Lab. Are we to deny him this opportunity, or are we going to move forward and place him on the path towards higher education? I think that it is about time that the individuals involved in the proposed Life Lab Program be judged as human beings, and not as just cold facts to some cost accountant determining how much money some college can gain from their enrollment. The desire to advance in life should be met, and deserves to be met in a manner far superior to the approach presently taken."

Don sent copies of his letter to Dr. William Stokes, E. Colliflower, and Sgt. W. Smith, Florida Highway Patrol.

As an administrative chessman, I had made a very bad move. Unwittingly, I had moved out of Miami-Dade's internal game and onto the institutional chessboard of the state. Checkmated on my first move, I anxiously looked around to see other places Life Lab might have overlapped where it shouldn't. I found three more groups meeting outside of Dade County's boundaries. An ex-prisoner who had completed a Life Lab Internship was meeting weekly with a group in a community center in Fort Lauderdale. Several clusters of Seminole Indians were meeting in scattered outposts in the Big Cypress Reservation. Another recent Intern was meeting with a group in a high school on Key Largo.

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In January of 1972, having just returned from the University of the New World, Swisse, I knew that I could not continue my education at the University of Miami, and it's traditional setting. I had been involved in scriptwriting, film-making, prose, poetry, art, and the exploration of alternatives to education and lifestyles. I had years of International travel, 3 years of Shakesperian voice training, 12 years of dance, and a self-directed high school education. There was a year at the University of Miami, majoring in Mass Communication, where I was involved in set design, construction, etc. and started a documentary film company called "Freedom Films" which won 1st and 2nd prizes in a national documentary competetion.

When a friend of my mother suggested that I look into the new program called Life Lab, I jumped at the opportunity, and consequently became a student for two semesters, from Jan. of 1972, to December of 1972. At that point, I began to work for the Life Lab program, and later earned a B.A. at Shaw University, in Raleigh, N. Carolina, through their external degree program. I am now halfway through a Masters program with Lone Mountain College, and am still employed as an advisor at Life Lab.

STEPHANIE

It is my experience that all of life is education, learning, absorbing, experimenting, integrating and snythesizing the input. The most valuable expereinces simply are those that become processed and unified into the organism's consciousness. This is the concept I enable people to grasp.

"The purpose of education is to rise above your background." (Nary) The purpose of education is to integrate your background and grow from there to a new "here."

I myself find the need to constantly continue my education -- therefore enhancing my growth and effectiveness.

SLADON

The experiences of facilitating peer groups is an interesting hatching ground for all the member's personal growth. Currently I have been involved in the instruction and demonstration of self-directedness (the limitless horizon of growth) and personal directness and assertiveness. This philosophy is fun and fascinating to share, seeing the flowers of each individual's heart bloom. Additionally, to spark personal growth within the "learners", I am developing the individual's need to confront areas of academic weakness and to enjoy enhancing neglected and avoided portions....essentially I am sharing the philosophy "learning is life, life is learning."

PART 9

A PLAN TO FOIL THE DEMONS OF "PROGRESS" WITH AN AUTOMATIC SELF-DESTRUCT SYSTEM

When Lee Henderson came to find, as he put it, "what all the Life Lab *commotion* is about," we made a full confession. We explained how the Belle Glade program had mushroomed out of control. We reported our out-of-county groups, and we promised to phase out each by the end of the term. Already, most of the students, including the Seminoles, had agreed to try commuting to Miami to meet with our staff. Lee said this was O.K. We just shouldn't conduct classes in areas served by other colleges. Our confession out of the way, we discussed educational philosophy and the evolution of Life Lab.

My experience in administration and with the *commotion* we had just weathered gave me new respect, I told Lee, for two early Life Lab concepts. One was our *automatic change accomodator*. The other was our *five-year, automatic self-destruct system*.

From our earliest days, even when we were growing so fast we could never do everything that had to be done, we used to schedule short blocks of time just *to think* together. We would set a time and a place, and whoever wanted to could come.

For several hours we shut ourselves into an oasis of quiet. We had no rules. However, we knew that this time was too valuable to use dealing with practical, everyday problems. Those would consume us again the moment we walked back out of that room. If we talked about Life Lab at all, it was about its esoteric dimensions. Sometimes we would start with a short statement of educational philosophy. It might be something written by one of us. Or it might be from the writings of Whitehead, Dewey, Tagore, Gandhi, Kazantzakis, Fromm, Rogers, Goodman, Farber, Goethe, May, Maslow, Shakespeare, Krishnamurti, Watts, Yogananda, Hesse, etc.

Each time, one of us took responsibility to bring something of value to share. But there was no compulsion to discuss it further. In this sense, our gatherings were like Quaker meetings. It was O.K. if everyone remained silent. It was here, for me, that the synergic energy of Life Lab reached its peak.

For weeks we kept coming back to a concern with the survival of systems: Why organizations became obsolete and turned inward, devoting more energy to their own survival than to the mission they were organized to perform. As they lost relevance, the cycle of rigidity seemed to intensify. Having lost their real reason for being, they became cancers sapping meaning even from those they served and sucking life from society.

We talked about how society roots out its cancers. Bankruptcy, foreclosures, and revolutions (both peaceful and violent) prune dying institutions. We sought to understand the mechanism by which we made ourselves obsolete. What caused live organizations to turn into soulless cells living off the lives of others?

The writings of Alan Watts, Herman Hesse, Baba Ram Dass, and Rabindranath Tagore all dealt with this sickness of human spirit, and led us into some new thoughts about the concept of *karma*. *Bad karma* grew out of lopsided use of our human organism. *Good karma* came from balanced living, by not allowing any aspect of life, or even of death, to slip by us unnoticed.

Karma was the measure of how we lived and died. Organizations and all systems of man were merely the residue, the *karma* of the people whose energy went into their creation. Organizations, then, were a kind of mythical encrustation of traditions, the surface remains of people dead or dying.

This imagery gave us hope, as we conceived of educational systems as only mythical encrustations of traditions waiting for the infusion of new *karma*. We wondered how, from our oasis of quiet, we could tilt the karmic wisdom of systems even slightly more toward a condition of balance?

A good place to begin was with ourselves. "*Be* the thing you would teach," was the counsel of Ram Dass. "*Be balance*." While considering this counsel, we made important decisions about

41 our view

TIM MC GURL

As an advisor at Life Lab, I perceive a most interesting ambivalence of theory and event taking place, of which I see "freedom vs. acquisition of subject matter" as a major issue.

Students need **freedom** to be able to find the issue, problem, need, interest, etc., within the general area described by the course description. If learning is to happen, I feel, what is studied/explored must be meaningful to the individual.

As far as the subject matter is concerned, after personally studying a "discipline", i.e. psychology, I feel that there are certain concepts that need to be "explored" in order for a person to be familiar with the course. In light of this, one problem stands out. In the attempt of trying to put students in touch with a long list of concepts/competencies/etc., the very action of it generally seems to take away from an individual's problem/need/interest centered approach. So, the students sometimes have difficulty relating to the competencies, and if they do 'get into' the course by themselves, they do what they want to do, which is generally less content oriented than a traditional class.

I do feel, however, that the students pursuing their own interest, even though not traditional content oriented, learn more than if they had had to learn specific course content. The issue seems to be extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivation, and how do we make course content intrinsically motivating...

Life Lab should not be considered as offering the **same** as a traditional class. When I realize this, I start thinking about what actually is; a much more productive and exciting way to learn!

CARMEN CUMMINGS

In March of 1973, I heard about Life Lab through a friend. I was a housewife and mother, involved in the children's school, and interested in tennis. I had a high school education in Lima, Peru, and some adult education courses from the University of Hong Kong and the University of Miami.

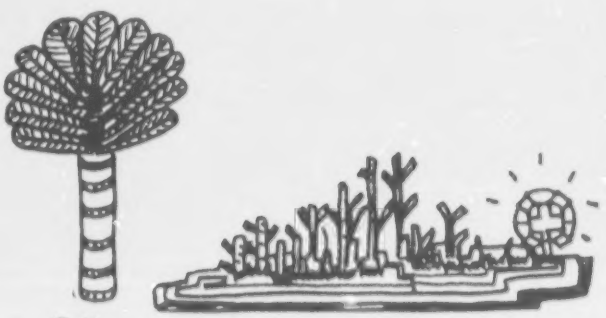
As a student, Life Lab showed me, literally, that "THE WORLD **IS** MY CLASSROOM". The opportunities to learn are there for me at all times. All I must remember to do is to keep my eyes, ears, and heart open.

Life Lab has given me real reinforcement, self confidence and a very real sense of self worth. All of these came to me through the total acceptance and trust I felt from my advisor, Nancy Ross, and from the freedom given to me by her and others, to be me, and to experiment as a student, intern, and advisor.

There is one more very important thing Life Lab has allowed me to know. That is an understanding of interdisciplinary studies...the marvelous discovery of the relationships of ALL things. I consider all of the above learnings more than relevant to my life. I consider them the essence OF my life.

At this time I am an advisor at Life Lab, and am enrolled in Barry College with the intent of attaining a Bachelor Degree. I am learning more about Philosophy, Religion, Psychology, all of which relate to my major goal, that of knowing myself better, and in turn, being able to understand my fellow beings. I suppose you could say that my goal is to become a more aware individual. Observation of self and environment is my principal tool, though I use any method that feels comfortable.

Life has made Life Lab, and Life Lab has made Life.



Life Lab. We decided its systems should remain fluid, rather than become fixed. It should never be totally organized. We tried to invent ways to flake off the encrustation of even our own karma. One invention was a concept we called the *automatic change accomodator*.

While discussing how a system could, by design, accomodate change automatically, we explored the ideas of Marshall McLuhan, Buckminster Fuller, and the *Futures Conditional* people like Robert Theobald. How had change traditionally come about in the past? We seemed to have assumed that keeping things the same had more survival value than changing them. And, generally, it did. You don't tinker with success.

Change came, of course, but to make it happen took great effort. Before the information explosion and the apparent speeding up of man's evolution, things most deep-rooted had the best chance of surviving. The process of change somewhat resembled children playing a game of *tree tag*. Hanging onto a tree was the only safe place to be. But the game required an occasional risk. If you let go one tree, you darted as swiftly as possible to the safety of the next and hung on again. Inertia was, and still is, the driving force of most systems. To generate enough momentum to make small changes, someone has to use a great deal of energy to start the process. It seemed to be a good system, the best for its day.

Here is where we made a speculative leap regarding Life Lab. We guessed that during the last few decades the dynamics that gave *keeping-things-the-same* its survival value had changed. A basic law of the systems of life a law on which most organizations were based was no longer valid. It was as though water had suddenly come to a boil. The old laws governing the properties of water were no longer valid. We were dealing with steam, a new form of energy, one that could not be contained in our old vessels. Apply the wrong laws, and the energy could be dissipated and wasted, or it could explode.

If the old maxim or maximum security in maximum deep-rootedness had run its course, what then was a new maxim to take its place? We sensed it would have more to do with *grass-rootedness* than *deep-rootedness*. We then seriously set about to construct a philosophy of organization that would provide a new vision for Life Lab.

Our first organizational imperative was that all systems would be *ad hoc*. Each organizational chart, each linking of staff, each channeling of resources would be tentative. But we knew that time and inertia quickly have a way of cementing the joints. The *temporary* building becomes *permanent*. The *ad hoc* committee invents its own reasons for permanency.

We agreed that well-functioning parts of the system ought to be accorded a measure of continuity as long as they continued to function well. *Our major goal was to organize in such a way that permanence would not be automatic or assumed.* Rather, the expectation would be that after a specified amount of time, changes would occur automatically.

Philosophically, we were saying that having to expend energy to keep things the same is preferable over the old mode where it took vast energy to initiate change. The need for change is so certain, we hypothesized, that if someone has to exert extra effort to make the changes happen as often as they should, we would, like the *Red Queen* in Alice's *Wonderland*, have to run as hard as we could to merely stand in the same place, and there would be no chance of getting ahead.

For example, we applied this philosophy to our tape cassette system. We decided arbitrarily we would remove around 20% of the tapes from the system each year. This would allow us to put new, updated tapes in and to remove outdated tapes and tapes evaluated low by students. We assumed this automatic *creaming* would continually improve the overall quality of the system through the years.

Implementing the automatic change in the tape system is an assigned responsibility of the Life Lab managers, but the decision as to which tapes should be removed is basically a *grassroots* affair. Students evaluate each tape they listen to. Evaluations are tabulated by computer. A list of the low 20% should be circulated to staff. Unless someone intervenes to say this tape or that has value and should be kept, all the listed tapes will be removed from the

WALLIS RILEY
THE DREAM - THE REALITY

It was a surprise; sincerely, I felt the butterfly flutter of excitement as I was led surrealistically around the nooks and crannies of Life Lab. I found them, the surprises, on my desk and in my desk drawer. And there was Norma, assuring me, "Oh Wallis, don't worry, there are more, many more, just keep looking."

Almost immediately, I saw, through the foggy mist in her office, the cabinet bookshelf which I opened. There, I counted six bottles of Christian Brothers wine with a note in Norma's all-too-familiar handwriting saying, "To Wallis, Happy Birthday." That note was one of at least three -- in the same familiar handwriting. Then, in a moment, they were all there bellowing, "Surprise, Happy Birthday, Wallis." And I, truly astonished, just stood there smiling.

Suddenly I heard a voice (Joyce's) saying, "Gee, Wallis, you must be the only person I know who wouldn't at least cry (to show her pleasure and surprise)." Honestly, I wanted them to know I cared that they cared. Sincerely, I wanted them to know that I wanted to be there. Truly, I wanted to show them that I belonged. So, I tried. I tried, and I tried, and I tried to cry.

The tears would not come. The butterfly flutter turned to the painful anguish of Prometheus fettered helplessly to a rock; to the hopelessness of Sisyphus struggling through eternity with his elusive rock. The tears would not allow themselves to be forced out. I was like a balloon that wouldn't pop; or, a loaded stomach that wouldn't burp itself. The pressure was too much and forced me awake. Eyes opened, my reality re-forming, I sighed, "It was all a dream," but the rapid heave of my heartbeat continued.

Now, this dream was one among several since my entrance into professional re-discovery engendered by Norma, my friend and a Life Lab Coordinator, who, in this alien territory gave me back myself. Over a year ago, I wrote in my journal (which she "made" me keep) that she must not know really why only she could have done this. Even now, I am not willing to share this reality with anyone.

About the dream, this one occurred during the fall of 1975. Frankly, I was aware then of my steady withdrawal, my obdurate refusal to become the form of "approved" humanity that appeared to be the thread of Life Lab's reality. I had discerned that this thread did not possess the artistic merit to withstand the scrutiny and invasion of divergent interests of a different humanity. My self was caught in a whirlpool of forces in which my only recourse was to assume the fetal position and move willy-nilly back and forth, around and around.

If I did nothing, I could at least still be wherever the forces finally posited me. For I had come to Life Lab from an interdisciplinary program, much more structured and less innovative, in which my schedule was set and my rountine all-too-familiar. It was comfortable. But, now, here I was in Life Lab among zealous middle-class educational entrepreneurs whose idea of sensuous eating was a barrel of apples and oranges topped with crunchy nuts and fresh coconut, whose idea of a schedule was twelve hours in and guilty hours out, whose idea of privacy was two minutes in the John! My guilt would consume me, for I could never survive in this educational commune. I became intransigent.

To understand the ease with which I could execute this moratorium, one must grasp a bit of my history. During the revolution of beautiful Black people, I had balked when well-meaning Black students warned me that each time I straightened my hair, I denied my blackness. I straightened my hair "permanently." At one job, I had published a school newspaper surreptitiously in spite of repeated warnings that news had to be censored by the school principal. I mean, I have smoked in "No Smoking" classrooms and have repeatedly worn skirts during the pantsuit era. A dedicated women's libber, I have never forsaken my bra even when forced to admit that for me its sole function was decorative . . . !

So, there I was inexorably planted and holding. There I was aware of gifts, aware that to accept these gifts on terms other than my own would be to deny the me in me. Dammit! I would NOT eat yogurt and nuts to be healthy!

system. Our goal is to adapt this regenerative, automatic-change system for all resources we use.

In our discussions, we saw the computer as part of both the problem and the solution. If allowed to, its rigid rules could bend our philosophy to its own ends, leaving those it served bent, mutilated and under its control. But, in essence, it was only a tool, an extension of ourselves. As a tool, it could be a powerful ally in short-circuiting the laborious and inefficient channels of bureaucracy. It could infuse into decision-making fresh, realistic data unadulterated by the filtering processes of bureaucratic chains of command.

This concept led to our second organizational imperative for Life Lab. Using computerized feedback, we determined to link each change process to the intended beneficiary of the change - the students and the staff. In this way, we hope to replace a deep-rooted resistance to change with a process by which a grass-roots referendum allows the educational consumer to largely determine the nature of changes.

The idea of the grass-roots referendum also suggested to us a fresh, new model of *accountability*. Here was a way to use technology to give the consumer a voice that could be heard directly and clearly at critical points in the system wherever power to make decisions was located - whether at division levels, college levels, or legislative levels.

Our grant from the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education helped us implement our new thrust into technology. The *Fund* supported the development of computer support systems that would open Life Lab to even greater transparency. Our goal was to create a feedback link by which all students could tell us what was and what wasn't working in Life Lab for them.

Anonymous feedback surveys of all students now are tabulated by computer each term. The students evaluate their own efforts and ours. They share their perceptions of Life Lab as a whole, and their opinions of the work being done by themselves and by other students. They evaluate the support given them by Life Lab's staff and by other campus services, and they compare this to other learning models they've experienced.

While survey answer cards are anonymous, they are keyed to the individual staff member responsible for the student's *peer group*. Thus, student responses can be tabulated and printed out for each staff member. Each term, then, all members of Life Lab's staff can get fresh feedback from their own students on many dimensions of their learning experiences. They can compare their own student responses with average responses for other staff, evaluate their own strengths, and set developmental goals to meet whatever criteria they set for themselves. We can do the same for the entire program.

These printouts, and others generated by support systems developed with assistance from the *Fund*, provide, at this stage, a kind of primitive radar system for navigating Life Lab along its *automatically changing* course. The *navigators* are three members of another invention to facilitate change called our "Management Team." This team is the administrative head of Life Lab. As an experiment in the fall of 1975, Bill Stokes named the three acting team managers as co-directors of the Life Lab Division. They equally share an administrative payroll supplement for the responsibilities and duties they perform in directing the division. Any one of the three can sign division authorization to obtain services from the audio-visual and duplicating departments, and they can each process personnel papers, etc.

In effect, three different people with different personalities and philosophies have the power to activate special services and new experiments. This increases, both the availability and the possiblity for staff or students to *find* and to *sell* an administrator on some idea they want to try. An even more important contribution to both *automatic change* and to *programmatic continuity* is our concept that the Management Team is not a fixed *troika* of the same three people. We now have four qualified and experienced team members, and our goal is to have five or six or more.

The individual responsibilities of the Management Team can vary somewhat according to the special skills and personalities of the three members serving as active administrators at any

This was a professional impasse of which I was only vaguely aware. I knew that I must one day emerge from my amniotic state, must soon take my place somewhere, but I could not afford to deal with that. For, in the meantime, I had become quite comfortable in Life Lab, encouraged by my stimulating student contact and newly - discovered academic freedom. With them, I was me -- and we loved each other freely.

This spiritual co-mingling had begun the April before at the end of my first term in Life Lab, during a five-hour colloguy I shared with three students. We had sat there, high above the downtown squalor, looking out toward Biscayne Bay, watching the effects of the cl[illegible] personal waning daylight which, during the Spring afternoon, threw long shadows sp[illegible] with silver sparks which darted back and forth off tin rooftops, from sleek skyscraper windows, and over the placid ocean sheen. Mesmerized in bean bags, we studied the afternoon drama outside and rapped endlessly about what it meant to risk, the fears and the exhilaration of discovery. We talked, Stefi, two others, and I, and personalized and integrated our four separate realities . . . . It was an experience.

Later, in a dream, I found myself floating serenely in the silken waters of the Bay. I was surrounded by several people, all struggling shoulder deep in the water. I was there with them. Yet, I was strangely aware of my separateness, for I was not "in" the water, I was lying comfortably on top of it, moving gently back and forth with the rhythm of the waves. It occurred to me to get into the water with them, I mean really get wet; but, the beauty and comfort of moving with the heartbeat of the ocean, resting nonchalantly on my elbows, knowing I would not drown, knowing I need not get wet, need not join in with them, knowing that I, who cannot swim could enjoy the ocean in a different way, knowing all this, I did not move.

Suddenly, I found myself above them, high above the people in the water, a pendulum moving back and forth in an improvisation resembling a swing. It was exhilarating. Below, the people seemed to beckon me to join them. I did not stop immediately. I hung in there, experiencing it, until the envy in their eyes persuaded me to descend. In the next moment I was aware of the peaceful sounds of my home. I closed my eyes and ears quickly to return to that halcyon environment, to the pristine oneness I had felt in that dream. I could not recapture it.

I now realized that to find my separate peace in the Life Lab atmosphere of manifest energy, I would have to further extend myself. All around me people who had made Life Lab a visable meaningful entity were very busily propelling themselves further into their own self-made spaces; molding clay while baking bread, reaching Alpha state while feeding five children, taking field trips into uncharted beaches and questionable movie houses, attending and giving lectures on raising psychic alligators, writing competencies and listing recources from drug rehab to hog calling. But I, armed with my Life Lab colleague's astrological vita of Taurus eccentricnies, curled up closer to myself and to my wonderful students. But now we were sharing our poetry and our goals and our failures and our worries and our resources twenty-four hours a day. I had carried Life Lab to my bathroom at home.

I made two decisions: to publish a Life Lab magazine and to become a student again myself. For the magazine, we met, faithfully, Kai and I, but we never seemed to really grasp a single line for our venture. Finally, one day in late November, a visitor penetrated the smug atmosphere of our weekly meeting. Her open scorn for our artistic thrust threw our little world into chaos. For more than four hours, we struggled for the meaning of our meaning in Life Lab. We argued; we challenged; we confronted ourselves as learners, doers, evaluators. From this struggle emerged the germ for our magazine. Through the haze, the light came forth, and I realized what the magazine must be. It was the end of the whirlpool. I had been posited in the daylight of my own awareness of Life Lab and of its meaning for me.

one time. Responsibilities, generally, are divided among three broad areas: Staff counseling and development, Coordinating internal Life Lab support systems, and Coordinating the interface between Life Lab and Miami-Dade's systems. The active Management Team members also have students, and they conduct seminars open to all; but their staff obligations are reduced 50% to 75% in consideration of their management duties.

To the degree we have a qualified group of managers acceptable to Miami-Dade's administrators, we can continually infuse new approaches into our management system. We also should be able to avoid ever having to make a traumatic *change of the old guard;* where one director is replaced by another, and the character of the division has to reflect the personality of the *new leader.*

One other *change potential* built into this system offers additional creativity for both individual Management Team members and for the system. A plan worked out with Miami-Dade's Personnel Department allows team members to work on temporary assignments either for Miami-Dade or as a consultant for other institutions. Also, a team member can take time off *without pay* to write or to do other creative activities. The salary dollars saved when a Management Team member is working elsewhere can be paid to a guest resource person to work temporarily at Life Lab. This *exchange* can provide valuable, new experiences for staff members and also allow Life Lab to obtain expertise not otherwise available to us.

During the first year of the grant, I remained division director while the staff experimented with various management systems. In the final year of the grant, I withdrew as director to complete our grant commitments and plan this book. Three staff members, Esther Colliflower, Kim Porter, and Norma Watkins took over as the Management Team, and Bill Stokes appointed them co-directors of the Life Lab Division. Esther, one of Life Lab's first students, received her master's degree from Lone Mountain College just in time to qualify for the professional staff and as a co-director. Thus, she reached the top of the career ladder she helped to create.

The "primitive radar system" used by the Management Team to navigate Life Lab's course of change includes the following computer support systems created partly through our grant. These include:

* *Resource Encyclopedia* - All resources, books, tapes, films, people, places, etc. are kept on computer cards. This makes it easier to update, take out, and add new resources. Periodically, the computer printout from this program is used to publish a new, updated edition of the *Life Lab Encyclopedia of Learning Resources* which is used as a basic workbook by all Life Lab students.

* *Competency Descriptions Encyclopedia* - This functions like the Resource Encyclopedia, only it produces a list of competency descriptions for all our courses. Its printouts are used to publish *Life Lab's Competency-Based Learning Workbook*. Students can use these *model* competencies for their study contracts, or they can create their own.

* *Student Feedback Program* - This tabulates anonymous evaluations made by students on all aspects of the Life Lab program and their own progress. Data is keyed to the Advisor responsible for the students making the evaluations. Feedback analysis is printed out for each staff member.

* *Student Listing & Records Program* - This is a key record-keeping program that has allowed Life Lab to expand. It keeps track of hundreds of students assigned to various groups being facilitated by different Advisors. It also helps us identify problems with registration or other college procedures.

* *Student Interest Survey Program* - We are still experimenting with this program. It can cross index dozens of different interest groups to help students get together with fellow

44 our view

SUE GOLDMAN

I think the thing I have enjoyed the most in working with students has been the culmination of using my own interests, such as my interest in the pre-history of South Florida both as it referred to man, plants, and animals, and the geology of the area, to actually implement the students' course work.

I began that by going out and doing my own research and just asking a few students along who were in anthropology, geology, natural history. As those few became more and more interested in seeing what they were reading about, I thought that maybe this would be worthwhile to offer as a resource.

That was how, actually, the field trips came about. I was really taking them on my trip, so to speak, on my own personal interest trips. I spoke to Mac about this, feeling a little as if this were deceptive in a way. He said, no, to him it was much more realistic when you had the motivation to do it from within. So we just continued that way.

That has made it a stronger integration - that's the only word I can think of for what I'm trying to say - because it meant that I was looking for resources for myself that were pertinent to the field trip and then was anxious to share the knowledge I was gaining right at the moment. It made it much more spontaneous.

I have found now that when I start to look at the group's needs, I am happier meeting some of their needs and combining my needs with theirs. It's moved into that realm now. We are on the brink, as a group, of going even further than that in planning at least a month ahead, so that we can share with an even larger group. But we decided we would do it only on a trial basis. If it changed the spontaneity or real enthusiasm for the group, we would simply revert back to our old way of doing because I felt that was needed vey much.

Field trips have spilled over into the peer groups, I might add, not necessarily confining itself to natural history and anthropological areas. We are finding that the peer groups want to go out on almost anything I can find. For instance, we had one peer group that was heavily social science and government last term. They met in the morning. So we asked around the group and found that one person was anxious to go into law school when he finished his undergraduate work yet he was not quite sure enough and we decided that one way he might explore this, with our interest meshing with his, was to do a tour of the courts on Tuesday mornings. So we visited all the courts we could find, the different type courts, so that he would have an opportunity to observe the legal machinations that were going on and we too would begin to understand the governmental system. At least the judicial part of it. This was quite worthwhile, I think, for all of us. It met several resource needs.

From that, this term there evolved in another group a desire to form field trips that would meet with ethnic groups in Miami. We will try to study the variety of ethnic cultures in our area and do everything we can to meet as many different groups as possible during the term. Now that might be a resource for humanities and anthropology, cultural anthropology and social sciences. I really feel good about that.

students and staff to discuss shared interests, or to plan activities together, or to form carpools and other cooperative endeavors.

* *Advisor Activities Log* - This program tabulates weekly *logs* recorded by each staff member showing the various ways they use their time for student support. Printouts analyze *time use* for Advisors individually and for the Life Lab staff as a whole.

While we were meeting in our oasis of quiet to plan a course of automatic change for Life Lab, we never imagined the technological path our esoteric dreams would follow. But we concluded then that no matter how sophisticated our navigating system, or how valid our feedback, or how good our management, we would eventually drift off course and become more involved in maintaining our own systems than in serving our students. Our solution to this dilemma was what we called our *"Five-Year Automatic Self-Destruct System."* We speculated that at the end of each five-year period the most *efficient* act we could perform would be to self-destruct and start over again. I still believe that both the concept and the plan for implementing it are valid. And, I might add, while writing this book we are now in that critical fifth year.

The concept is based on the belief we will inevitably embellish our original lean and meaty philosophy with more educational paraphernalia than we can effectively carry. While each accretion would seem to serve an important function when added, over time they would weigh us down.

In our self-destruct plan, we will gather all the forms, procedures, manuals, reprints, program descriptions, every combustible curriculum embellishment we can find. On a moonless Friday night we will heap every shred on a roaring bonfire. Over the weekend we will celebrate the demise of the old Life Lab and the coming new birth. On Monday the Life Lab community will gather to begin the process of creation. In a circle meeting we will take turns sharing our memories of Life Lab. We will write down whatever we agree were the best parts. These will provide the lean and meaty foundation for our fantasies for the future. And these fantasies will have to generate the energy we will need to begin all over again.

45 our view

DENICE GOLLWITZER

It's getting toward deadline time for the book. There is so much that is a part of my everyday experience that is also a viable part of Life Lab. In trying to trace my experience back to April of 1973 through February of 1976, I realize that I can only catch a glimpse of the reality that was...it can never be the same.

I remember confusion -- not really understanding WHAT this was I was getting into. I had recently undergone serious surgery and during the time of my recuperation I had much time to think...it was then that I realized I had to re-structure my life -- but where, and how? After almost 20 years of being engrossed in family life with my husband and 3 children, how do you take time for yourself to fulfill a gnawing need to be other than an extension of a family in society? In trying to un-identify, I found I had to re-identify. I took a course with CCEW and during this time someone came and spoke about Life Lab. I decided to try it. I had always wanted to finish my education but I was anything BUT a student in high school. This approach appealed to me; at least I had a choice and some control over WHAT and HOW I learned. Survival was my impetus.

Life Lab was confusion and chaos to me. Forms and more forms, daily journal keeping was extremely difficult, the 8 orientation workshops were like a different world to me. I observed people within the Life Lab community who seemed 'turned on' and I really wanted to experience that kind of excitement. I attended every workshop and seminar I could. I listened to tapes as if within them, I could find the TRUTH I was seeking. I read books that appealed to me, but I had vague feelings of uneasiness...is this education?...can it really be this FREE? How does any of what I am doing have anything to do with the subjects I am taking? All the "shoulds" came into view.

Things were always changing so fast within Life Lab that the "shoulds" seemed to disappear. I had a notebook full of every form conceivable, I tried them all...pages upon pages of writing...I would look at it and ask myself, what are you doing? My programmer was shocked at the volumes of processed material,...so was I!

Little by little, within the different views and choices within Life Lab, I saw the reflection of a FREE society. Not only were people taking responsibility for their education, but their LIVES, and they were actively involved in shaping the administration and procedures of the institution that had the power to sanction the validity of their education. Within this context the honesty, trust and integrity of all those concerned students and staff was akin to a Utopian process...this was a Utopia I did not want to see go under. During that summer I realized that the only truth that was real was within the individual and that this constant chaos was not chaos, but energy...constantly changing form; there were really no opposites; there was no

PART 10

THE CONFLAGRATION

Obviously, our nerve failed at the last minute. The fact that this book survived our mythical self-destruct conflagration is evidence we did not do as thorough a job as we could.

I would like to describe first the remains of corpus Life Lab. Then I want to provide a partial inventory of the accumulated fat rendered on the ceremonial pyre.

This document remains. Four of us, Pam Johnson, Wallis Riley, Nancy Ross, and I kept copies of each part as it emerged. Two of us burned our copies, and two of the original manuscripts remain.

A last minute legal maneuver by Steve Walfish, Life Lab's researcher saved another set of documents. These were the computer program operating manuals he and Bea Lippman were completing as a final task for Life Lab's grant. Steve recited dire warnings about willful destruction of "government property."

The computer programs themselves also are still in tact. Harold Harper, our program analyst, just shook his head at the idea of burning them and said, "You're nuts!" I feel OK about this. These programs were not intrinsic parts of Life Lab, but were more like natural resources that can be used again and again by us and by others in many different ways.

Our ceremonial "house cleaning" reached beyond the scope of Life Lab. For a year I had worked as a consultant on the "Change in Liberal Education Project" funded by the Carnegie Foundation. In meetings around the country with the Project's director, Frank Wuest, I had collected far more ideas than I had been able to give.

Yes, Frank, your Project Newsletters are gone; also the plans for change from DuPage, Warren Wilson, Governor's State, Colegio Cesar Chavez, East Texas, Mendocino, Brigham Young, Incarnate Word, Hampshire, Bowling Green, Evergreen, Bennington, etc., all up in smoke.

My own plans for change met the same fate, Frank.

When I returned fired-up from *Change* meetings, I often worked for several days drafting new tactics to introduce change into the *Wonderland* of administration.

In our conflagration we burned one of my favorite, never-implemented organizational charts, the *Inverted Pyramid Operational Network*. In it, I shifted the focus of administrative power away form *paperwork* and *keeping order*. With a Systems Coordinator overseeing these functions, I zonked the director's position to the very bottom of an upside down pyramid. In this position of *servitude*, the director dealt with two priorities - observing and evaluating service to students, and supporting staff. The job focused on feedback and evaluations systems, computer support programs, experimental new programs, staff development, conceptualizing and redefining of programs, and communication systems.

Among the papers I poured onto the pyre were copies of this chart with a 1974 memo to staff which began: "I believe we have a little less than two years to create a Life Lab alternative management system that smoothly functions within the larger Miami-Dade system and yet keeps open Life Lab's vast array of options and its action-research approach to development."

Watching the charts burn, I thought I now understood better a bureaucracy's need to focus on the maintenance of order. It was because all of its parts were totally interdependent. By its nature, a bureaucracy was like a machine with interlocking gears. The machine required each gear to function smoothly, or the machine would not function itself. Maintaining the smooth relationship of a bureaucracy's parts was, then legitimately, the highest priority of administration. The function of administrative power was the unfailing maintenance of the *body*

such thing as going back; the atmosphere was one of acceptance; no view from any one person was treated negatively; the basic investment of each individual **was** their "truth" and an underlying core of common truth between everyone ... an unspoken contract. Their individual integrity seemed to be at the ROOT of a common consciousness. (The choice was always available.)

For almost six months I withdrew into the, Life Lab community. I talked and I listened, I sought out people to engage in conversation; I wanted to share their experiences. Each one was different to a point but what was basically happening was the knowledge that each of us was gaining in our pursuit and building up to a kind of competency; we all became teachers....learning so much from so many people. It was like having private tutors in every subject imaginable. It reminded me of the way students used to live with their professors, within their homes....eat with them, laugh with them, cry with them, learn with them....constantly exchanging their everyday experiences and gaining knowledge through mimesis and assimilation.

Just as LOVE is a spontaneous act...so was learning within Life Lab. I didn't go about and say, "From 9 to 10:30 I will learn about Philosophy...at the time I NEEDED to know I could find out...my need arose out of what was happening NOW! Learning about Sartre from someone who had just read Camus' "The Stranger," who was into existentialism, came from a need I had at the time to talk about it...the existentialists, in general. This kind of exchange was a constant happening.

I mentioned a Utopia earlier...within this context I later realized, you don't work for such a thing; in holding to it you become enclosed. Utopia at this point was the ability to function in other areas of my life in the same way I was functioning in Life Lab. At this point I stepped out with 'my truth' and became actively involved in a community crisis hot line and again the process was repeated...the common core of 'truth' existed here, also.

My involvement extended into many areas from there on. Building up an expertise within prevention and intervention through many different kinds of experiences, training and doing all tied into social work, education, society and family life. It was all the same...individuals striving towards significance...meaning, my truth was a common truth.

How do you explain this underlying phenomena of humankind, this root of awareness present in all of us, in many forms? There are many words for it, cosmic unity sort of says it all...my word is empathy.

Today, I am an advisor in Life Lab. We are still changing, we still have chaos, we still have trust and integrity, but one thing strikes me forcibly: although when I speak I am coming from my own beliefs, my frame of reference includes that of many people. My feelings and my views embody those of many I come in contact with. Before, I would have sat back and said, "They own their own problems, let them speak for themselves or be silent, the choice is theirs." Not today, although it may not be something I have difficulty with.The **fact** that someone else does and the **fact** that I understand it, the **fact** that I can view it within their frame of reference ..he **fact** that I care...involves me in a spontaneous response to what is happening and this involvement is my 'earning process.

No, Life Lab is not a Utopia, but a constant evolution and I am within it and outside of it. Although in and out may speak of opposites, they are not. It is this process of drawing from, bringing to, extending out and involvement with, that expands into a changing environment and a changing way of life...a growing awareness of the **truth**, that what we know is much less than what we are and that what we are, usually reflects what we know ...this is growth, an evolution of consciousness ...this is Life Lab.

politic. If an orderly relationship of its parts was maintained, administrators assumed the organization would do whatever it was supposed to do - teach, govern, sell, manufacture, heal, etc. As long as the administration used power to hold the bureaucracy together and its parts in proper relationship, then administration was performing its highest function; which was, I thought, why the actual job organizations were supposed to perform often got second priority, and seemed to get only whatever energy, care, and concern administrators had left over from their main task of *keeping order*.

Warmed by the bonfire, I thought of new models not dependent on the machine-like rigidity of most bureaucracies. These models would be based on more autonomy for the parts, more trust; a federation of learning communities with direct accountability - like that given Life Lab.

The chemistry of the times seemed right for such new approaches to accountability. We had begun to show, I thought, how technology can open the way to more autonomy and more responsibility for individuals, rather than more enslavement. Such *federations* were more like a natural community than a bureaucracy. Based on shared values and common interests, they might develop the prototype of what Marshall McLuhan predicted would be the *global villages* of tomorrow. Instead of a bureaucratic nightmare, the fateful year "1984" might open the door to renewed freedom and self-reliance for such modern day villagers.

Already dreaming of a new curriculum for *de-managed* schools where people mattered, I absentmindedly continued to stoke the flames. Into the fire went old forms, memos, charts, documents, page after page of Life Lab history - ***3002 Life Lab Fact Packs, 3014 Life Lab Information Sheets, 3041 Self-Directed Journal Forms, 3030 Tape Check Out Instructions, 3029 Key Sort System Instructions, 3046 Film Response Forms, 3050 Learning Resource List Available By Mail, 3051 Learning Resource List In The Community, 3067 Small Group Learning Concepts, 3068 Life Lab General Feedback Form, 3063 How to "Active Listen" To Life Lab Tapes, 3075 Group Process Evaluation Instrument, 3076 Self-Directed Group Lab Evaluation Questionnaire, 3079 Life Lab Announcement Form, 3129 Things Learned Workshop, 3103A Instructions for Interpersonal Feedback Chart, 3098 Learning Experience Report Form, 3097 Learning Experience Summary Log, 3100 Life Lab Looseleaf Resource Notebook Index, 3089 Life Lab Study Centers List, 3074 General Evaluation Form For Seminars, F4.28.74 Life Lab Unit Report Forms, 3054 Classification: Forms And Information By Use, 3052 Forms and Documents Index, 3042 Tape Response Form: What I Am Hearing, Feeling, Etc., 3043 Tape Response Form: Negative/Positive & Predictions, 3044 Tape Response Form: Task-Oriented, 3045 Tape Response Form: Group Process, Self-Directed, 3108 Creating A Study Plan Self-Directed Materials, 3130A Process Things Want To Learn Workshop [Including Volunteer Box], 3131 Draw Yourself In A Circle Lab, and many more.***

Stoking the flames with artifacts of the past, I was vaguely aware that we were playing out the very drama we had dreamed of in our oasis of quiet. Yet, intoxicated with fantasies of the future, I found it hard to concentrate on our ritual bonfire long enough to really appreciate its significance.

47 our view

Dear Mac:

I might be beyond deadlines for your material gathering process in the production of the Life Lab report, but I'll forward you some material in the event it might be helpful. When you first asked me for some contribution, I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to say or add anything more than what you have already said in writing since I believe we have thought alike over the years concerning the basic philosophy of Life Lab.

After listening to student tape evaluations, etc., for the 75-2 midterm, it occurred to me that I might try to snythesize some of their feelings. I was moved with an appreciation for the **struggles** I heard among students trying to define their educational activities, processes and products. Listening has given me some basic insights to share.

One of the primary questions confronting the Life Lab person is "What does it mean to become a student?" The question is important because it involves basic questions concerning both a philosophy of education and the student's self-concept.

The older Life Lab student (one who has not participated in the formal educational process for the past ten or more years) brings to Life Lab a more traditional concept of the educational process based upon his/her prior learning experience and environment. The student enters Life Lab (among other reasons) with the hope (and knowledge) that Life Lab will provide him/her with a curriculum strategy which is less threatening than the educational process he/she had experienced during the last contact with formal, more traditional education. The primary expectation is for a "freedom" in the learning process -- the freedom to integrate relevant life experiences with substantive input. There is a thirst for knowledge -- even an impatience for learning enough facts to satisfy the student's self-expectations that he/she **learns** information. That he/she feels the need to learn **information**, or **enough** information, provides an indigeneous source of motivation sometimes troublesome to the student's consciousness and evaluation of his/her self-concept and self-evaluation. The student is most concerned about **being** what **learning is. Life Lab is that continuous search the student acquires.**

Motivation stimulated by the freedom and openness of Life Lab learning strategy creates feelings of anxiety and guilt as well as satisfaction and happiness among students. Evaluation reports from students indicate a wealthy mixture of both. The successful student is able to attain a balance between the tension of living with him/her - self and learning, of abandoning old concepts of education for new processes in learning.

Some previously low-level motivated students are "turned-on" by Life Lab opportunities and for the first time in their lives begin to feel excited about the process of learning and the personal rewards attained therefrom. Their personal enthusiasm is reflected in the documentation of their work. The chemistry of Life Lab is genuine. It's learning strategies are powerful catalysts. The resultant chemical reaction product is learning which is authentic.

Life Lab is in the business of producing catalytic learning agents among its students. That learning occurs is very important. That learning will continue to be promulgated in the life of the student is our most important product as I see it.

Becoming "turned on" is not the sacred provincal domain of the "hippie," but rather the experience of many who have touched base with Life Lab learning.

DARWIN E. GEARHART

Assoc. Prof. Sr., Funeral Service Education, N. Campus, and a parttime cluster coordinator for Life Lab at North Campus. He hopes to finish his doctorate soon, and will then take courses in other areas.

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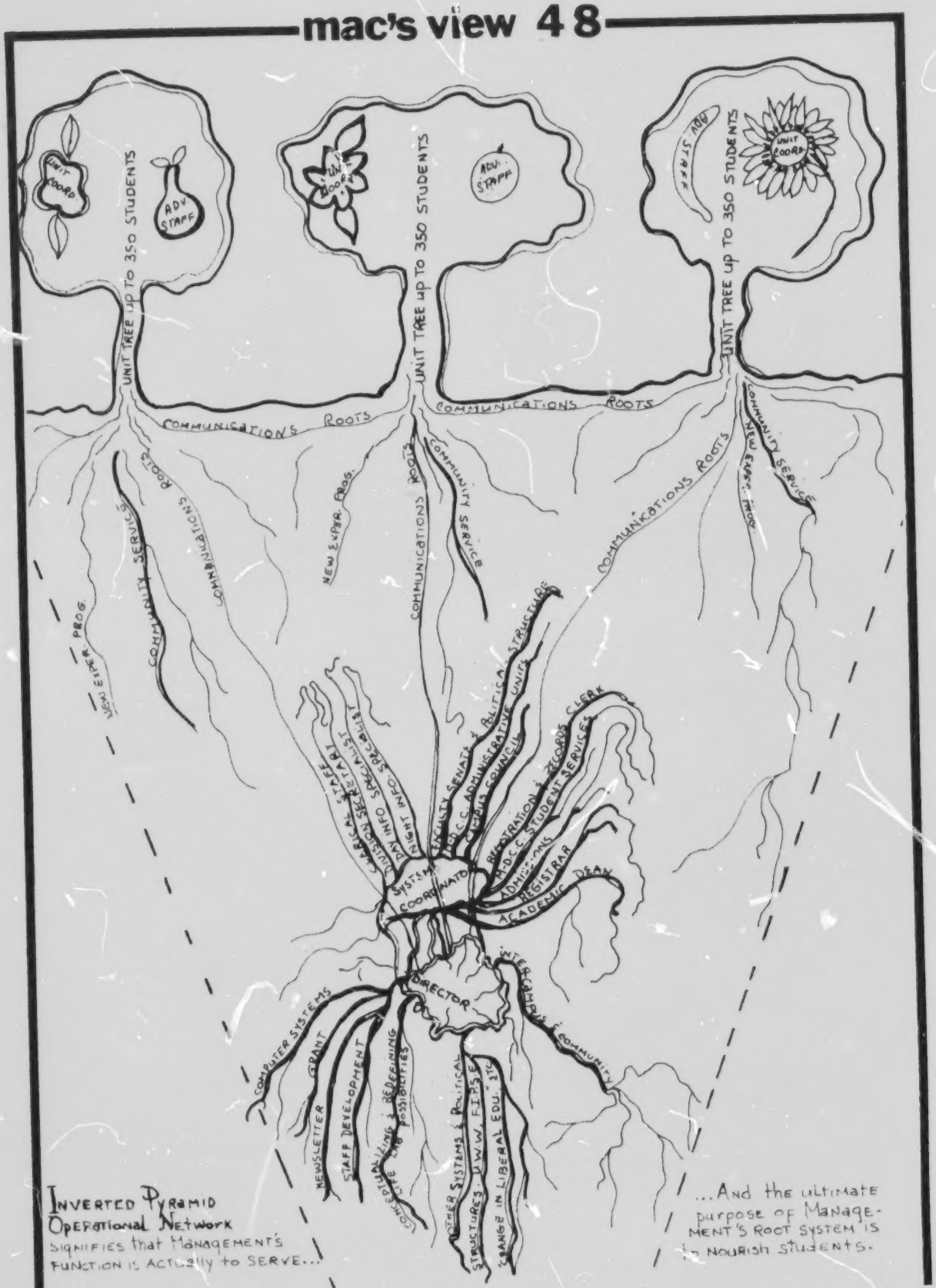

INVERTED PYRAMID OPERATIONAL NETWORK
SIGNIFIES that MANAGEMENT'S FUNCTION IS ACTUALLY to SERVE...

...And the ultimate purpose of MANAGEMENT'S ROOT SYSTEM IS to NOURISH STUDENTS.

48 our view

ALAN MC CONNELL

My early 12 years bout with academia had been excruciatingly painful, but once freed from the other-imposed obligation of the HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA, I vowed never again to submit my self to that particular brand of stifling dogma. As I continued my studies and research on my own, I found it difficult, if not impossible to go much further without better credentials and access to the educational tools available in the academic world. At 33 years of age, this seemed out of the question. Then, I heard about Life Lab.

The apprehensions of returning to school with "kids" and studying things I already knew were immediately swept away as I found that, not only could I continue my studies and get credit, but also I had the opportunity to be a part of another exciting challenge I hadn't even considered; that of becoming involved in the development of new models and methods of competency-based learning. A more holistic/realistic approach to individual needs in education has proved a most worthwhile endeavor.

Life Lab has most relevantly provided the opportunity to further prepare myself academically and personally for that which lies ahead, according to my own goals and plans, of course. As a student, and later, as an advisor, I have become more acutely aware of the needs and problems concerning education, which has given me much more respect for the academic problem now existing, that of education having no practical application to the student's real life.

I have appreciated the experience and responsibility of facilitating the direction of others toward the accomplishment of their own goals, as it has further enlightened my own understanding of human nature.

Through Life Lab, I have been able to evaluate my knowledge, (and lack of knowledge), gained by independent studies in many ways. The most important learning experiences I have been involved with, besides the actual advising of students, are presenting symposia and conducting workshops in experimental psychology and parapsychology, which are my major interests. These activities have led to designing course curricula in both experimental psychology and biofeedback for M-DCC, Downtown Campus, and the University of Miami, teaching bio-feedback in an adult education program, preparing to teach a credit course in B.F.T. at the Downtown Campus, being active in a large community organization and holding a 2nd Vice Presidency and experiencing more intellectual and emotional stimulation than in the past. I am realizing that these actions are all taking place in and around those "hallowed halls" I once despised and ridiculed.

Would I be doing what I am now, at this time, without the Life Lab program? Certainly not! My activities would be similar with regards to the nature of my studies, but the level of involvement within the community would be dimensionally different and, I am sure, less rewarding. Life Lab has provided this opportunity of growth and accomplishment for which I am deeply grateful. I hope others will also have the same opportunity.

PART II

CATHARSIS

Watching the hypnotic flames, I was aware that every new model I could dream about also would grow obsolete. I felt a sense of recognition, one of those mystic moments when one sees the whole *cycle*. Starting point and ending point were the same. There was no path to follow. Instead, there seemed only a silken thread, a wisp of smoke that flowed through all life.

In that fleeting moment, I saw it contained the whole length and breadth of that living thread within me. Its flow was all that existed. I saw how I chopped it into unrecognizable bits. Into minutes, hours, days, weeks, years, generations, lifetimes, and deathtimes.

I felt again the pain that went into each burning page. The chopped up hours of trying to communicate ideas and feelings in just the right words. I felt the warmth of the flames, and I let the wisp of smoke flow through. I was filled with admiration for everyone who had contributed bits of their chopped up lives to Life Lab's fire.

I realized that Life Lab forms and documents were in folders, in file cabinets, and on shelves in many places. There was no way to burn them all. Nor was there any need to. Suddenly, I was enjoying the fire because it was warm, and it reminded me of the thread of life that was mine to enjoy. Burning leaves could serve the same purpose. Smoke going up from altars toward cathedral ceilings. Smoke going up from Buddhist joss sticks, from Hindu temples, from campfires, from roasting marshmallows.

Our ceremonial self-destruction was a replica of what happens every day in the natural world, when we let it. The unneeded parts in nature are no longer used,and they wither and die, naturally. In our own lives we forget what isn't important and we stop doing what has no meaning.

There is a natural wisdom and economy built into life. Unless artificial barriers prevent it from happening, life continually changes, and we do not have to seek for meaning. Meaning flows through us constantly. We need only to be awake and respond.

49 our view

RICHARD ADAMS

I'm trying to develop a total two-year ecological-wilderness-agriculture experience (I need a simpler title!), interrelated with urban and wilderness survival. That is, being self-reliant under any and all circumstances, developing individual awareness about the destruction occurring to the environment, so that students establish their own values in relation to that. I hope this might lead up to a four-year program with a major in something like environmental sciences.

Everyone in my peer group is required to take at least one course relating to ecology, biology, man and environment, etc., a course that interrelates. Instead of being assigned to one peer group, they can come to any of my groups which will be more seminar type. Two students from each group will turn in their total work every week, so that will keep me in touch with documentation and their being up to date and fulfilling their contract. Also all students will be assigned under a "buddy" system to help keep up to date. Part of their contract is to be responsible for evaluating one other student's work each semester.

I'm taking on more of a teaching role than a passive role, which my students are very much in favor of. I'm working with things more of my interest that I feel I can evaluate better, and I'm continually increasing my knowledge in these areas.

Also the weekend field trips have been very successful, going out every other weekend for six to ten hours, instead of going to two weekly seminars of three hours. The smallest group we had was eight. Many time we had more than twenty.

I may do some extended trips involving more stress so students will gain more insight into their own potential, and also to help younger students establish stronger values by going through a hard time. A weekend doesn't do that, but when you get into the third or fourth day, not enough sleep and sore muscles start taking on a different appearance.

PART 12

INTRODUCTION TO FANTASIES

In the three books I am now learning from (*Small Is Beautiful Economics As If People Mattered, De-Managing America The Final Revolution*, and *Human Life Styling Keeping Whole in the 20th Century*) the authors recognize the natural wisdom and economy built into life itself. (1) Each, from a different perspective, shows how we can begin removing the self-imposed barriers that often make our lives meaningless to ourselves and to society.

The nature of this barrier is capsuled in the 1976 report of the "Change in Liberal Education Project" to Alan Pifer, President of the Carnegie Corporation. Mark H. Curtis, Chairman of the Project Policy Board, makes the case for a *bubble-up* rather than a *trickle-down* principle of management.

This suggests a fundamental reversal of the normal flow of resources in bureaucratic structures. It also necessitates relocation of decision-making power in the bottom layers of a system instead of concentrating authority in the apex of a management hierarchy.

It is this *grassrootedness* concept along with an ecological principle basic to the three books listed above, which provide the lean, meaty philosophy I want to weave into my fantasies for tomorrow. The ecological principle is simply that *the health of any system is dependent on whether we are putting more into the system than we are taking out*.

In organizations, are the participants, on the whole, putting more in or taking more out? The same basic questions can be raised about any ecological system (backyard garden, the Everglades, the earth, etc.) It is also applicable to any organism. Is my life style adding more to or taking more away from the ideal life I would like to live? It applies to my relationships with my family, and all the sociological systems of which I am a member.

I am intrigued by the idea of an educational community focused on these principles. I believe the health of mankind's evolving new social systems depends on a clear understanding of them. A good way to develop this understanding would be to practice it and experiment with it in an educational setting.

I believe we can become such a community if we follow the counsel of Ram Dass and *be* that which we believe in.

1. In ***Small Is Beautiful Economics As If People Mattered,*** E.F. Schumacher, a top British economist, shows how the "efficiency of bigness" bankrupts and corrupts itself; and, in the spirit of Gandhi, he shows how all of us *global villagers* have it in our power now to take care of ourselves, and take care of our ailing earth as well.

   In ***De-Managing America The Final Revolution,*** Richard Cornuelle, former executive vice-president of the National Association of Manufacturers, lucidly describes the elements of bureaucratic organization that require management to "exclude and ignore the very human qualities a society most needs to stay alive." He proposes a process of de-managing America in order to recapture our society's capacity to adapt.

   In ***Human Life Styling Keeping Whole in the 20th Century***, Dr. John C. McCamy, a physician practising Preventive Medicine, leaves no doubt as to how the life style we lead is destroying our physical and mental health, and also the environment upon which the well-being of all other planetary villagers depends. Like Schumacher and Cornuelle, Dr. McCamy sees more hope in individual action than in bureaucratically imposed solutions.

50 our view

Introduction to
ALBERT DAVID CONLIFFE
by Nancy Ross

Dear Book:

I guess I am writing this introduction because I was the first party to meet Al Conliffe as he literally wandered into Life Lab one morning from a nearby marina.

By late afternoon that day, I found that Al had no place to stay, no more to wear than the clothes on his back, no money to speak of, no food to eat and no job. For the next two weeks, while he was looking for a job, he slept in the bottom of boats parked in a local boat yard, ate what we brought him from home and what fruit grew on the trees around the city, and he spent an enormous amount of time delving into the workings of Life Lab. He had decided to become a student as soon as possible, and did when his night clerk job came through. He became my student. MY STUDENT! Ha! The reason I laugh is that from the very start, he was MY teacher. He had been involved in all of the things I was interested in for many years..the flute, eastern philosophy, dance, yoga, and he taught me with ease and joy and love.

Very soon he had a business of sorts going, was attending staff meetings, helping me facilitate student groups and spending a good deal of time helping students individually...and at the same time, attending to his own documentation and fulfilling his own Life Lab contract. Somewhere along the line, he inherited some responsibilities with our A.V. department, working up a curriculum for a music workshop and gave it, opened up a bank account, interned for the position of program advisor, and rented a house. Somewhere else along the line, he bought a car, created and filled the position of Life Lab information specialist, became a "full-time, part-time" staff member, and began working with a group of prisoners at the stockade. And from that time till this, Al has become an integral part and parcel of Life Lab.

Like the rest of us, Al is linked to Life and Life Lab by his own needs to give along with the very special, very sweet rewards for his efforts ... a kinship with and membership to, the lifelong process of meaningful learning. (As you might have guessed by now, my relationship with Al has been, and is extremely meaningful and I love him very much as do my family members and those who work and learn with him. I am also more than pleased to have had the opportunity to write about our meeting, our knowing, and our being.)

All these words do not come near saying it all, or even a part of it. But anyway, thanks Al.

Love, Nancy

The *call* to the academic community to become a generating force where people may gain "a reassuring sense of a more balanced way of life rather than being threatened by it" comes from all quarters. While working on this book, I receive from a friend a reprint from the editors of *Change* Magazine titled "An American Agenda." The following quotes from that report describe the reshaping of institutional goals I believe our fantasies could help achieve.

"Our colleges and universities . . . can, by example and by commitment, now help to reshape a nation of new and thoughtful young citizens who can live responsibly by the consequences of their actions, and who now begin to act as if this were the last day to reshape their world. And this act of will and imagination is best performed out of the hearts and minds of individuals, wherever they may be, and not out of enactments of governments . . . "

"This new commitment to navigating the passage to tomorrow cannot be directed by some centralized bureaucracy. It can mushroom, however, out of the American grass roots. This fresh effort, no matter how utterly modest its beginning, will fuse life with academic thought to their mutual benefit. The new efflorescence of human intelligence, coming out of local initiatives, is well suited to higher learning institutions, particularly as their national influence is now on the wane . . . "

"It is not too late for the American academic community to adopt habits still untried but now made urgent by changed world circumstances. And it would be to the everlasting gratitude of the earth's inhabitants if academics and those now in college would begin acting on their best instincts for humanity, instead of just studying them. From here on out, to the end of the century, no academic agenda, and no major debate over the education of the young, should remain oblivious to this central purpose of living - and not just imagining - the future . . . "

"To educate for survival in a finite world is a far more crucial business than to prepare oneself for a future of limitless expansion. The American frontier and American abundance cried out for sharply competitive and individualistic instincts. We saw the education of our young as essentially a private activity, in which success and failure were measured in terms of individual fortunes with little reference to the larger human condition. All mankind was measured on a grade curve, and 'may the best man win . . . ' "

"The search for a global equilibrium in all spheres of human life must now begin in earnest, and it must begin at home. We must begin to teach new habits and new propositions. And it is in the college - where there still remains the luxury of joining one's principles to one's life - that a measure of learning and a measure of action may be integrated into a larger whole. It is there that one can still create something worthwhile in the shortening shadow of the twenty-first century without being intimidated by the enormity of the issues. Malthusian doctrines, once theoretical musings in a sated America, now are as real to us as electrical brownouts and an earth atmosphere with too little ozone and too many pollutants . . . "

"Somewhere in this country there must be a group sufficiently farsighted to see how learning and readjustment to new world circumstances mesh in profund and significant ways . . . "

"The turn in our common fortunes will not come about through the heroics of a few, but as a result of the subtle changes by which a nation binds a more wholesome lifestyle that is consistent with new global circumstances. This search has little to do with ideology and politics. With fortitude and imagination, these modest rivulets of action can gather into a massive stream that forms a new social consciousness. . . "

We would like to think of ourselves as one of those modest rivulets of *action*. The fantasies that follow, hopefully, will help us become part of a new social consciousness that will make possible a more wholesome and realistic lifestyle for the generations to come.

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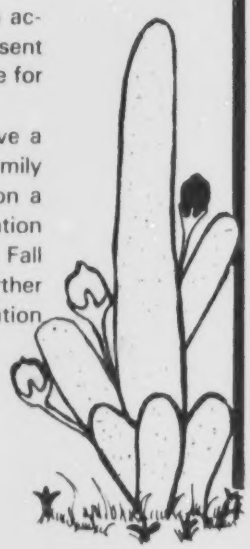
ALBERT DAVID CONLIFFE

I grew up and learned of man's great potential and capacity for cruelty as well as beauty in New York City. Gang wars in the ghetto's duel to the death taught me how to learn and how to survive. The NYC public school system taught me to develop a sense of humor, and Lakewood High School in N.J. demonstrated that bigotry and ignorance definitely had it's limits. One year of Bloomfield College gave me my first glance of 'the middle of the road', and Howard University in Washington, D.C., polished the cultural crud I had been acquiring. Of the eight years I spent there, three were as a 'formal' student, and five were as a 'student bum'. Those last five were much more enjoyable and informative as I recall.

The San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury at it's height, 1965-66, revealed new possibilities with the emergent counter culture. Three political campaigns covering six years of involvement followed, plus nine months in Santa Monica lounging on Muscle Beach attempting to write a novel. This produced enough frustration for my return to formal education again, this time at the University of California at Berkeley. After three semesters, I returned to the 'street education' which I again recall to be most informative and character building. Frustration returned and I enrolled in D.C. Teacher's College, where, after one year, I was called in and politely requested to leave because I had neglected to mention my previous attendance at Howard University on my original admission's application. At that point, they froze my transcripts. I moved on to Berkeley's Free School for six months, teaching classes in Sailing and Fencing, and became a student of an Alternative Life Styles class. It was here that I learned of government surplus material being available and bought a boat. I outfitted and lived aboad for a year while preparing to sail the Caribbean and after a year of cruising and sailing, (and yet another of lounging on Pacific Beach while studying Dancing and Yoga), I became involved in a Model Cities Black Nationalist run radio station and newspaper which was funded for five years. It had a built in self-destruct since it was non-profit, and when it did, I sailed out and on to Mexico, Guatemala, Panama and Barbados, where I set down once again for a while.

Over the years, with experiences both rich and rewarding, I have gained some highly valuable skills and knowledge. I sail, navigate, dance, fence, am an accomplished musician (conga drums, flute and picollo), repair engines, sell insurance (and most anything for that matter), organize, stimulate and facilitate both large and small groups of individuals into activities and through learning processes, produce video presentations, stage plays, present mime classes, and enjoy myself all the while. I have developed a love for learning and a love for teaching. I have become unafraid to take chances and risk myself to the unknown.

I have been working as a Life Lab program advisor for the past two years and have a deepening interest in alternative forms of education. Being both self-taught and rather stormily formally educated, I have a deep appreciation for both. I have recently been working on a format for a MINI-LIFE LAB ACADEMY, designed to cover most of our General Education Requirements, to be introduced in seminar fashion to students, hopefully, this coming Fall Term. It is my hope that this supplement to our humanistic peer group setting will further prepare students entering their junior year in senior institutions. This is my present contribution to the growing and varied forms of the Life Lab Program.



FANTASY #1 - LIFE LAB AS A LAUNCHING PAD

If as *Change* Magazine editors say, "navigating the passage to tomorrow cannot be directed by some centralized bureaucracy," then it is doubly important to have de-bureaucratized systems available for the job.

In the early days of Downtown Campus, its lack of formal organizational structures made it a perfect launching platform for untried, grass roots experiments in *"joining one's educational principles and one's life."* One administrator, one faculty member and two students could launch, with minimum formalities, an experiment that required radical changes from the traditional patterns.

My fantasy is that Life Lab might become institutionalized as a permanently de-bureaucratized, de-managed haven for experimentation. Its mission could be to provide a safe and trusting place where interested staff and students search for new ways to mesh learning and needed "readjustments to new world circumstances." It could be a place where we might, by example and by commitment, learn to live responsibly by the consequences of actions.

In such an educational community, we would practice an environmental stewardship and learn to contribute to the health of those ecological systems we were dependent upon. We would learn to identify and cope with our own material addictions, to cut out the cancers of conspicuous consuption and planned obsolescence. In both our social and biological systems, we would try to put more in than we took out.

In his book, De-managing America, Richard Cornuelle suggests that the *de-managing revolution* necessary for our society to adapt has already begun.

"Adaptability cannot be contrived," he writes on page 78. "It is achieved in society in somewhat the same way nature achieves it. Mutations - innovations - occur in a completely random and unpredictable way. If they are useful, they survive. If they aren't, they disappear. If nature were 'managed,' this selection process would have been cut off as soon as a reasonable workable animal or plant appeared. The multiple groping necessary for growth would have been shut off. And the natural world, having managed away its capacity to adapt, would have died."

In some sense, I believe the *action research* model by which we let Life Lab develop its own destiny was an attempt to emulate this de-managed wisdom of nature.

"Authority cannot be fair," Cornuelle states on page 49. "It produces the hustler, the image-maker, the bullshit artist. Ours is an age when the appearance of results is better than solid accomplishments. It is the age of 'creative bookkeeping.' It is the age of getting ahead in business without really doing anything.

"It is an age of too many unenforceable regulations and too much energy spent in search of ways to evade them. Honorable men taught fair play on the playing fields of Exeter boast in their clubs about patently immoral stock deals - if they are legal."

"Colleges are accredited - a kind of institutional credentialing," he observes on page 57. "But again, the meaning is presumptive, methodically insulated from the world of results . . . "

"Now it is perfectly obvious that no education need take place in these accredited institutions. Probably a student would learn more in an evening with Betty Friedan than in a full semester in one of these expensive cathedrals of higher learning."

The launching pad in my first fantasy, then, would have two simple policies.

52 our view

PAT REED

Life Lab has made a great deal of difference! I've become much more receptive and tolerant of ideas different from my own. I've learned a great deal (and had **fun** doing it). The staff in Life Lab seem to be a great bunch of people - honest and kind. That's important. It's really nice to be with people who are more concerned with the well being of others, rather than their own well being. Really, a great experience!!

I'm a homemaker and I'm also interning with Life Lab (with possible hopes of future employment). I'm starting at F.I.U. this summer as an External Degree Student. My life style? Busier than in the past. I definitely like it that way!

My current goal is to finish at F.I.U. (I'll be done in Jan. '76). My long term goal is to perhaps get my Masters (funds permitting) and work at teaching on the college level.

One of my groups is a self awareness group. We have a lot of fun. I warn them ahead of time that we'll be doing nothing but self awareness exercises and learning about each other and ourselves and if that was not suitable for them then they should transfer to another group of mine.

I try to work the exercises from very mild into a more intensive state. Things are a little freaky if you come in on the middle of them. We had visitors a couple of times and I warned them that we did some strange things and not to be spooked by it, that we were in the process of learning things, and they could observe and participate and just have fun with us. And they were great! I mean, people who just come in from other peer groups. It was really strange. I thought, well, here goes, it'll just die, and they won't react, but they did.

And of course during "Visit Another Advisor Week" I played with the idea of not doing anything that day and then I thought, no, that's copping out. The group was into it at that point, they didn't want to be disappointed, so we went ahead and did our thing. That was the day they had to bring a smell in a white paper bag. Couldn't be a brown paper bag because they have a distinctive smell of their own. But like a bakery bag that doesn't have a smell. And they were to put it in there so nobody could see it. The idea was that you could smell things and think that you're smelling something else completely. I proved the point first because I just **knew** that what I was smelling was ladies bath powder and it was really a chocolate chip coconut cookie. But I just **knew** they were all wrong and I was right.

Of course the visitors thought it was a little strange - sniff, sniff - if you put your nose in a bag and sniff a lot, this doesn't look too good! I had a few policemen and they were making comments about glue. But it was fun, they learned something about smells, and about the fact that they take things for granted.

For the other part of "Visit Another Advisor Week," the group was supposed to bring a significant object, give it to someone else, and that person was supposed to say why they thought the object was significant to the first person, and it was strange how people interpreted these objects.

The other thing, I have men and women in my morning group and the men did not understand the term "significant object." I assumed, and I shouldn't have, that they knew what I meant. I learned something. They had to be told what a significant object is. The women knew right away, something that they cherished, something that they'd had a long time, something that had special meaning. The men just brought anything, and it was really a learning experience as far as that goes, because men don't think in those terms. One guy didn't even bring anything. And he was one of those who participated gladly, so he wasn't being uncooperative, he just really felt he didn't cherish anything. That brought about a conversation right there. We talked to him about that for awhile, and he decided he did cherish some things but he wasn't aware that he did.

The awareness exercises don't always go the way they're planned. More often they go better than they're planned and that's the fun thing about it. My night group heard about it from my morning group, and now they've decided they'd like to try it. And they're a whole different kind of people. They're very conservative and I told them, fine, we'll do it, but you've got to cooperate with me, you can't back off from these things. So they're ready to do it, and I'm looking forward to it.

One would be based on the wisdom of Tom Fryer when asked by Esther and Lil for permission to direct their own education. Helping them to accomplish *their own* educational goals and to get credit for the learning they achieved in the process was more than a policy for Tom. It was our job.

The other policy would be based on a clear understanding of Ram Dass's concept of teaching as the art of modeling, (of being) rather than a function of funneling information. We would teach by practising what we preached. If we believed we had information and insights and values worth teaching, this curriculum would be taught by our actions and by our involvement, as well as by our words.

FANTASY #2 - A "BUBBLE UP" EDUCATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY

This would be an amalgamation. It would include systems of accountability developed with help from the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education in Life Lab. Its style and curriculum design would resemble a variety of creative and credentialed programs now "navigating the passage to tomorrow." These existing, experimental flagships sail under such banners as Universities Without Walls, External Degrees, Institutions of Open Education, Extended Degree Programs, Adult Degree Programs, etc.

The essential ingredient of this fantasy, however, is its *bubble up*, instead of *trickle down*, characteristic.

For me, this means that all processes in this model of education, from budgeting to evaluating, begin at the bottom. They begin with the persons the model is designed to serve - the students and their concerns, rather than with the academicians and administrators.

If this essential characteristic is allowed to guide the self-directed development of the model, I believe it can immensely simplify such complex issues as accountability, accreditation, budgetary management, funding, hierarchical decision-making procedures, consumer protection, tenure and job security, academic standards, and student complacency.

I am optimistic that the chemistry is now right for such an experiment in "uncontrived adaptability;" one in which results will count more than appearances, where the bullshit artistry and the hypocrisy latent in each of us will be detected for what it is, rather than encouraged into full flower. Some of the signs of the times that I think herald readiness for such a *bubble up* approach to education are:

*The chaos of current "academic standards" where course labels and course grades have entirely different meanings at different accredited institutions, and often, even within the same institution.

*The near uselessness of college transcripts as a means by which potential employers can ascertain competencies, the maturity, or much of anything about graduates applying for jobs.

*The unconscienceable expense of educating everybody who wants and deserves an education through the traditional models.

*The extraordinarily well developed, but often underused, learning resources that now exist in traditional colleges and universities in all large population areas.

*The oversupply of trained teachers whose employment possibilities in traditional institutions likely will continue to shrink.

53 our view

NANCY TURNER

My advising style? I think a lot depends on whether I'm working with new or continuing students. For instance, in a group of new students, I feel the first semester is so important to make them comfortable with the mechanics of Life Lab, understanding logging, knowing where to look for resources, seeing their community as a classroom. Once they get past the initial fear of "how do I do it?" then I try to encourage them to do it independently and creatively in their own special way, and I'm sort of laissez-faire about it.

I try to get them to evaluate their **own** work, for instance read journals back to themselves, even read them out loud. Many students mean well and try hard, but their writing is poor. I don't feel I can sit down and teach them English and grammar, but **they** can evaluate what it sounds like.

As for the husband-wife team approach, Les and I didn't have any secret - just acted as a sort of reinforcement for each other. If I couldn't be downtown and he could, he could handle any problem. Had one of us been sick, the other could have covered the group. Our students saw the two of us as one, and felt comfortable coming to either of us.

BOB AND RITA SMITH

Bob. Main thing as a husband-wife advising team is the support we give each other. It's in different areas - timewise, we both know what needs to be accomplished. If one has something to do, the other can handle any problem with the students.

Rita: One time Bob wasn't feeling very well, and he had a peer group scheduled. I happened to be available and took it over for him.

Bob: As for evaluating, Rita's a separate entity. She has her way of evaluating, I have mine.

Rita: Right. Even though many times I do consult him because he'd been advising much longer than I have, so I go back to him, talk to him and see what his opinion might be.

Bob: Another thing is being aware of all the information, what's happening. Rita being in the Downtown office keeps me informed because I work more at South Campus.

Rita: We enjoy working together. It's not the first time we've done it. We worked together for three months at Florida Power and Light.

Bob: Being professional at school is one thing. At home, we change. We're still a team, but we become a family. We don't carry work home.

*The flowering of new interest in the concept of "lifelong learning."

The "flowering of new interest in lifelong learning" was analyzed in a special section of *Saturday Review* Magazine, Sept. 20, 1975. Education Editor, James Cass attributed this interest in part to the "the requirements of a rapidly changing society, the necessity for updating professional and vocational knowledge and skills, and the need to acquire new ones."

"But for many," Cass wrote, "this interest also represents a basic need to escape the routine of a highly structured environment - to give vent to the unexplored capacities and interests of minds that seek refreshment and renewal through active learning. It appears that we may be on the brink of a new era in education that will transform the nation into a *'learning society.'*"

In our experience in Life Lab, there seem to be many potential *lifelong learners* for whom the structured classroom in the traditional model does not provide the needed "escape from the routine . . . or give vent to the unexplored capacities and interests" of their minds.

Two other references relate, I think, directly to the deeper roots of my dream. One if from the American Association for Higher Education publication *Research Currents*, Oct. 1975. William V. Mayville, a research associate at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, wrote a report titled "The Trouble With Grading Is . . . " He ended with the following conclusions:

"The shift from teacher-centered evaluation to student-centered evaluation has resulted in a multiplicity of grading formats that reflect the tremendous diversity of programs and constituencies in American higher education in the 1970's. A part of this process has been the devolution of various grades into one simple form, which represents mastery as an achievable goal, and results in the tendency to grant every student an "A" or "Pass." This devolution is viewed by many as a corruption of the differentiating or sorting-and-sifting function of educational institutions. In this regard, there is a concern on the part of some that the meaning of grades and degrees has been debased by attempts to respond to the learning patterns of individual students.

"The question is whether the reinstatement of conventional (A to F) grades and an insistence on rigorous enforcement of 'standards' by institutions nationwide is possible or desirable. The belief that learning is independent of evaluation has profound consequences and could be the idea around which future grading systems will revolve. Just how undergraduate, graduate, and professional school admissions personnel will adjust to this notion is a matter of great concern."

Suggesting the need for more research, Mayville raises such questions as: "Should there be a return to the 'traditional' system of A-F, with guidelines across disciplines to insure maintenance of standards? Can disciplines with scholarly traditions that go back centuries accommodate new learning strategies and new evaluation methods?"

The two most strident answers I pick up in the writings,rumblings and grumblings of the "educational community" are the polar opposities: **Either** - ***back to basics and the good old standards. Or - revolt against corrupted traditions and "de-school" society.*** I was helped to see how much society loses if either extreme wins by my association with the staff of the "Institute of Open Education," an Antioch Graduate program for teachers in Cambridge, Mass. The Institute has for five years been developing its own "middle way." It believes in neither revolution nor retrenchment, but in simply going forward from "what is now." Its term for this kind of education is "renewal." What the Institute's staff means by renewal is beautifully described in their Bulletin:

"The Institute holds that education is the process through which society renews itself - if, in fact, it can be renewed at all. Renewal ceases when the problems created by a society, or by a school system, exceed in quantity or power, the resources available for their solution. At that point, renewal easily gives way to reaction, on the one hand, and revolution, on the other; but these are, in reality, alternative ways of achieving the same end, namely, avoiding the problems rather than solving them.

54 our view

JEAN LAKE: AN INTERNS IMPRESSION OF LIFE LAB

By reading the Life Lab reprints, I have found a concrete supply of information about Life Lab's philosophical and psychological foundations. The Life Lab documents have been especially valuable in identifying specific procedures for enrolling students, registering them, and conducting the various conferences. Reprints I ave also enabled me to sample a variety of subject matter written in a variety of styles from vary ng point of views.

I have participated in quite a range of L.L. spor sored group activities. I sat in on a circle meeting at the beginning of my internship in Jar.uary. The leader's en husiasm was contagious in the supercharged atn osphere of this meeting. I have since learned that enthusiasm for living and learning is an essential element for success in L.L. There is no room for apathy in self-directed programs. More recently, I attended a circle meeting conducted by a different Life Lab staff member. While the charismatic dynamism of the first meeting was not there, there was a subtle undercurrent of sincerity. This is certainly an important characteristic for success in L.L. To reap the full benefits of inner motivation, one must be sincere in his attempts. One who is out to rip off the system is forfeiting a valuable opportunity to learn and grow. I believe that there should be a screening of both students and staff members to reduce the number of L.L. participants who are in to beat the system. This would enable L.L. to more efficiently and effectively employ its resources and energy.

The January transition meetings seemed to be more befuddling than clarifying. I don't think students focused their attention during the large meetings and the bits and pieces they did hear, tended to confuse. The February transition was much more helpful to the students from my observation. The large meetings were de-emphasized and the major responsibilities for orienting new students fell to the program advisors. Since each Program advisor is a unique individual and therefore interprets L.L. from his own psychological field, I believe this to be the more pragmatic transition arrangement. While it is important for students to be exposed to the multifaceted approaches to L.L., I feel they need a more secure footing in the program before they launch their explorations.

I have participated in contract conferences with three different Program advisors. This gave me three different angles on the same activity and I know my own contract conference would vary from all three. There was a humanistic conference that Carl Rogers would have been proud of. It was openended and the Program advisor emphasized human understanding of the student as a unique learner. He delved into the goals of the student for his life and for his education. Needs of the student had utmost priority. While this is a beautiful, idealistic model, the conference for one student lasted five and one half hours. I am appreciative of this Program advisor's patience and endurance but realize it is beyond my personal limits. Further, there is value in allowing a relationship to unfold throughout the semester. So I sought another program advisor.

The second contract conference I observed was a highly structured affair centering on form 3015. Each item on the form was expounded upon, step by step. Questions were answered. Then the form was initialed and signed.. While this was far more economical than the previously observed conference, it lacked both the enthusiasm and sincerity I feel essential to L.L. as well as the flexibility which is a purpose for L.L.

The third conference I observed seemed to be attempting a balance. The Program advisor spent a brief (rapport-establishing) period before reviewing form 3015. He then went over the form step by step. Next came a questioning time. Then the Program advisor rather flatly asked the student if he would like to change any of the contract. He offered the option of reviewing a series of magazines in place of one book for one course. He never mentioned the depth study notebook, travel options, nor suggested that other possibilities existed. I think that it is very

"Although their ways or means differ in degree, reaction and revolution are committed to the same fantasy of method, the basic principle of which is that the past, our history, can be eradicated or ignored. Reaction demands that we pretend that the recent past has not occurred and that we return to some imagined state of affairs in which everything is under control.

"Revolution demands that we reject the total past as if it had never occurred at all, and that we create a situation in which nothing is under control and from which a fresh start can be made.

"These two views differ primarily in their degree of regression, but they are the same at least to the extent that they seek to avoid the present."

"*Renewal* is different both from reaction and from revolution because it takes as its prime material the present - 'what is.' It neither approves or disapproves the process by which the present has come to be, but merely accepts the present reality of what is as the starting point of its work. It is the present that has to be changed - not abolished, and this requires the acceptance of the material to be transformed . . ."

"The Institute of Open Education thinks it is no longer possible to standardize the courses of study that an educator should pursue - there is too much to be known, there is too great a variety among the starting points of the teachers, and the circumstances and settings in which the educators practise are too diverse. As a consequence, we think it necessary that learning be individualized, or rather, some way be found, so that the individual learner, the educator, can create and organize his/her own learning, his/her own curriculum."

"The fundamental principle of this graduate program is that it is the responsibility of the Institute of Open Education, Antioch Graduate Center, to provide a supportive, administrative and social structure within which the student can create the program of learning, the patterns of activity, best suited to prepare him/her to be an educator - a more effective educator . . . "

"The responsibility of the student is to commit himself to being a member of a learning community, to participate in the activities of the community, and to use the experience of the program as a way of finding his own appropriate starting points for learning . . . "

"The educator's task now requires a much greater range of sophisticated skills than is contained in the former schemes of subject matter, method and classroom management. These skills are action-oriented, and so not to be brought within the conventional academic rubrics of the history, philosophy, psychology and sociology of education . . . ."

In this sketch of my fantasized *Bubble Up* system of education, I will touch upon the respective roles of faculty and students in an ecologically based learning community.

A basic assumption about students I am making is that they want some results in return for the time and the money invested in their education. That, if they manage to exit from the system untouched and unchanged by the experience, then it is they more than the system that should feel ripped off. Further, students are considered in the best position to make judgements about what they are and are not learning, and the value of the learning to them.

If this can be accepted as, at least, an experimental hypothesis worthy of testing, then it provides a valuable alternative approach for achieving "*standards*" and "*accountability*."

There seems general agreement that traditional academic standards are on the way to becoming meaningless, or are there already. The traditional concept of standards assumes that faculty know what students need to know and know how to transmit this knowledge to qualified students, and can measure and certify success in students' attainment of this knowledge on a scale from A to F. In the preceding quotes from the American Association for Higher Education "*Research Current*" and from the Institute of Open Education's Bulletin, two issues were

difficult for new students to spontaneously reject any part of the contract. The fact that it is on carbonized forms to be filed in triplicate seems to make it an unquestioned authority for L.L. While form 3015 is an excellent document and convenient, I think more time should be spent opening the options. At least one of the Program advisors was so bogged down with registration hassles that he felt he could not devote adequate time to contracting. Hopefully, the new registration procedures will eliminate the majority of such problems.

During Update Conferences the program advisor must always be on guard against becoming enslaved by the forms. I have seen the forms checked and completed at the beginning of a conference and then set aside so some real processing could occur. But I have also seen updates dominated by interpretation of the forms. When this occurs, the forms are defeating their purpose for facilitating learning and are rather a hindrance. To prevent this from occuring in my own updates, I have left the forms to the end. The essence of the update conference is the processing of learning experiences and this should therefore have priority. There are exceptions which as a Learning Disability teacher I am particularly aware of. If the student's main mode for processing information is through reading and writing rather than discussion, then more time in an individual update should be spent reading the journal and reviewing the log sheets. In a group update, however, one of the purposes is sharing, so paperwork should receive only cursory attention and the emphasis should be on discussion. A well organized student may present a summary sheet with names of books and tapes processed and total number of hours logged at the beginning of an update so that the hardware can be quickly evaluated and free the mind for flowing discussion. Without this summary, however, checking would be too ponderous and would tend to close down communication lines before processing could occur.

My most pleasurable learning experiences at L.L. are the informal raps with students between formal updates. There is no pressure of "being checked up on," no forms to worry about, and free processing occurs readily. Certainly the formalities are necessary for accountability but the most efficient learning occurs when the motivation comes from within.

Life Lab is more than just a program at M-DCC. It is a pervasive way of life. It has changed my way of viewing television and supplemented my Micro College learnings about films. Now I see that even the most banal boob tube offering can contribute to my outlook on life. Every group I participate in has become a seminar from the Vic Tanny sauna bevy to the Teacher's Lounge lizards. I am more open to learning at the formal workshops I attend as part of my professional development. They are more than just opportunities for PIP points. They are more than ever true learning experiences. Reading is no longer an escape from life but rather a window on another scene. Life Lab has increased the percentage of gray matter that I use in my daily living transactions.

raised questioning this traditional concept. One was the belief that "learning is independent of evaluation," and the other was that today "it is no longer possible to standardize the courses of study" since there is too much to be known to prescribe in advance what everyone should know. Critics have raised many additional issues in recent years.

Unfortunately, many students who want a curriculum prescribed in advance by knowledgeable faculty may increasingly have difficulty finding one. I believe the traditional model is ideally suited for many students and many faculty members. The assumption that it is the only credible model, seems to me, to force an unnatural dilemma, which pits traditional and nontraditional models into unproductive opposition. It also implies that the integrity of one or the other must be inadequate.

Institutions that philosophically conceive education in this traditional mode, should be encouraged to establish rigorous standards accordingly. Other institutions should be encouraged to develop equally rigorous standards and systems of accountability relevant to alternative philosophies of education.

The essence of accountability is that a system does what it says it is going to do, provides what it says it will provide. I believe that all systems of accountability, traditional and innovative, have broken down in a bureaucratic mire. Legislators and Congressmen rightly demand accountability in the vast educational empire. New regulations are passed at all levels. Requests for more and more detailed reports filter back and forth through each hierarchy. Faculty and administrators are caught in a numbing repetition of tasks they consider meaningless. The answer to the simple question, "Are institutions doing what they say?" is becoming more and more confused.

The resulting confusion contributes to what Cornuelle describes as "the obsolescence of authority - a new American dilemma of historic proportions . . . Authority seems to be indispensable and unworkable at the same time".

The insatiable demands of an unworkable authority constrict the options of faculty and administration as well as the curriculum choices of students. The need for authority to have prescribed in advance how a job is to be done, how a budget is to be spent, and what will result, is the thing that "manages away" creativity and adaptability. It is the characteristic that allows a "piously corrupt" education to produce "the hustler, the image-maker, the bullshit artist."

I can testify that it does not foster either integrity or economy. I suspect every administrator can recite cases where employees adequately met the letter of the administrative law and produced nothing; where students met the standard *indicators* and learned nothing; where because money was in the *wrong* budget classification, it had to be "wasted" on superfluous expenditures rather than used for really needed items that hadn't been anticipated and budgeted. And how many bureaucracies encourage saving for a rainy day? The rule more likely is "spend or have it taken away at the end of the year - and get a budget cut the next year as your reward." Nothing can be more absurd from the perspective of sound ecological principles.

Regardless of whether a program is traditional or nontraditional, I think the root of the bureaucratic dilemma is based, in Mark Curtis' words, on a *trickle down* instead of a *bubble up* principle. Initiative and power come from the top. Budgets are dispersed from the top down. The ultimate recipient whose needs the bureaucracy was established to serve is consulted last and least.

I would like to see a system tried in which administrative structures were *bubbled up* to serve a basic organizational unit that devoted its full energies to serving students. I would like to see a system tried in which accountability was communicated directly and unfiltered through bureaucratic layers to anyone with responsibility or a concern for the integrity of the system. I think both the technology and the philosophical basis for such an experiment exist now.

In my fantasy I see a relatively small community of students and staff being given the opportunity to demonstrate how such a system could work. As we did when Tom Fryer provided

PROGRAM FOR PROGRAMMING PROGRAM ADVISORS

Due to the increasing complexity of skills involved in staff programming, and the magnitudinal variety of techniques and methodologies devised in this cosmological science of dubious value, the Committee to Redesign the Attitudes of Applicants for Programmer (CRAAP) has come up with the following courses contrived and constructed to provide a complete background knowledge of the experiential tasks involved in the daily routine of staff programming.

PROGRAMMING 101	12,579 of the basic concepts involved in the geodesically designed philosophy of Life Lab
CONFUSION 100	Basic Confusion. Four well-known methods of removing the final traces of Understanding from one's mind.
PROGRAMMING 120	Teaches the 1,000 most commonly used meanings of the word "Learning," along with clear methods to use your **word** to perform such miracles as; Confusing Your Student, Confusing both yourself and your student, to find your student to find a parking place during rush hour.
PROGRAMMING 121	A complete list of other special words, phrases, exclamations, and obscenities used by programmers.
CONFUSION 110	
PROGRAMMING 130	The Sensuous Programmer.
PROGRAMMING 131	Programming in Public Places.
PROGRAMMING 132	The Illegitimate Programmer.
PROGRAMMING 133	2001 A Programming Odyssey.
PROGRAMMING 133.5	A Programming Idiocy.
PROGRAMMING 134	Programming Jokes you wouldn't use on your best friend.
PROGRAMMING 135	Programming Jokes you wouldn't use on your worst student.
PROGRAMMING 136	Ralph Nader Reports on the tie-in between Programming and Cancer.
PROGRAMMING 140	R.D. Laing Reports on the tie-in between Programming and Sanity.
PROGRAMMING 140.5	Murry Banks Reports no tie-in between Programming and Sanity.
PROGRAMMING 150	The Godfather Reports on the Costra Nostra's refusal to tie-in with Life Lab.
PROGRAMMING 1,376	What to do 'til the Director Comes.
PROGRAMMING 1,377	Guess Who's Programming dinner? (Must be over 21)
PROGRAMMING 1,378	What to do if you ever become a Programmer.

the space and the trust for Life Lab to grow, we would agree clearly on our parameters. This would include agreement on our philosophy and goals, on our budgetary restraints, and procedures for accountability.

Optimal size of such learning communities could vary according to the style of staff and needs of students. I believe the *bubble up* fantasy I will describe is just one potential workable model. Key concepts in this particular ecologically based model relate to *educational goals, organizational structures, academic and budgetary accountability,* and *funding.*

Educational Goals - With staff serving as consultants, students will set their own goals. They will be responsible for documenting progress toward these goals. The *Learning Community* itself will be a major resource. As members, students will examine their own *ecological* impact and consider ways in which they *put into* and *take out of* the life of the community. They will both learn from this experience and also contribute to the community's well-being. Various processes can be used for documentation, but their study will culminate in some kind of project demonstrating excellence in an area of the students' special interest. Validation of completion of study plans will be done by a committee including the student, at least one peer, a core faculty member, and an adjunct faculty representative with expertise in the special interest area of the student.

Organizational structure - Six full-time staff persons (or the equivalent part-time staff) will work with a community of up to 160 students. Five core faculty members will each work with a maximum, full-time load of 32 students. The sixth staff member will serve a coordinating and support role. Staff and student representatives will form the policy-making board to manage the *Learning Community.*

If this *mutuation* is successful, it will not be allowed to grow any larger, but it can divide itself and spin off another community. When five successful communities are created, they will "federate" to form a *system* serving a maximum of 800 students with 30 full-time (or equivalent) staff members. When a *system* proved viable, it could spin off *seed communities* to begin forming another *system,* but it could not grow larger itself.

I do not think it inconceivable to fantasize a federation of five *systems* serving a maximum of 4,000 students. The *Learning Communities* themselves could purchase services, facilities and even hire staff from existing traditional educational institutions in order to best serve needs of their students. They also could *bubble up* administrative authority to a *system* and a *federation* level to more efficiently serve these needs. But the base of power will remain in the *Learning Community.* If such an experiment were implemented under the auspices of a state educational system, a *"federation"* of 25 *Learning Communities* might relate to state authorities much as state colleges do now. If the experimental learning communities were sponsored by a consortium effort like the University Without Walls, then each system of 800 students could hold its own membership in the sponsoring consortium and be responsible to it.

Each *Learning Community* will develop its own computerized resource bank, tape cassette service and other media services. Through computer linkages and joint planning, *communities* can share resources and sponsor large scale learning events if they wish. Staff and students will be encouraged to use neighborhood resources, including their own homes. With new video playback equipment, any living room with a TV set can be turned into a media center for small group meetings. A duplicating machine, high speed tape copier, and perhaps a telephone recorder-announcer can provide staff and students with an ample communication system. There will be no secretarial or other support staff. Faculty and students will manage their own registration, records, and advising, just as they manage their own curriculum.

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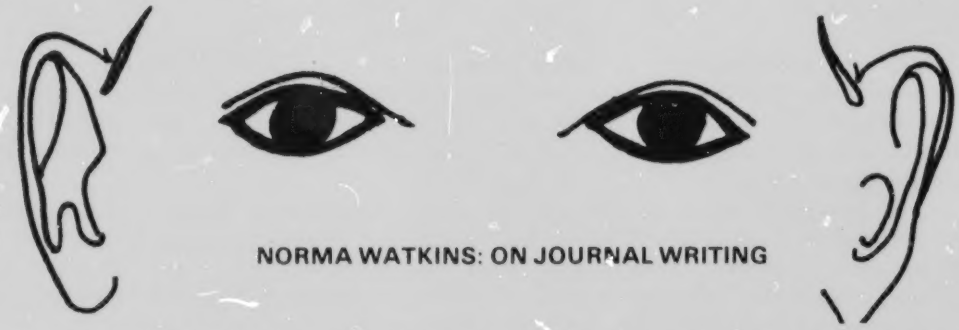

NORMA WATKINS: ON JOURNAL WRITING

The key to journal writing is being able to be introspective, being willing to look inside. When students write only about what they do, they get the least out of their journal keeping. These students feel mechanical, repeating verbatim the experiences of the day, and ultimately feel that the journal is useless and a waste of time. If it is of any benefit at all to them, it is in having a record of events.

When students write about what they do and what they learn, the involvement is deeper and their journals become commonplace books, full of reports on newspaper clippings, magazine articles, T.V. programs, interesting people they have met and places they have been. These students are not at all displeased.

On the deepest level are students who keep journals of what they do, what they learn, and what they learn about themselves. This is the hardest and, of course, the most valuable way to keep a journal. It means being honest and writing thoughts and feelings which are sometimes painful, confusing and hard to face. These students find that in learning about and revealing themselves to themselves, they are more able to take responsibility for themselves. Writing about the painful also involves a trust level for students who share their journals with their advisors; and that trust is that the advisor will not judge them or their findings.

For the students willing to take this leap of faith and tell their story on the deepest level, there develops a consciousness of self, about which Rollo May, in his *Man's Search for Himself* states, "actually expands our control of our lives, and with that expanded power, comes the capacity to let ourselves go. This is the truth behind the seeming paradox, that the more consciousness of one's self one has, the more spontaneous and creative one can be at the same time".

Journals written on this level help students become more self-aware which increases their self-esteem. They are spurred on to self-improvement and become more conscious of society. Students are also able to be more analytical, since this type of documentation gives them the opportunity to evaluate experience and feeling. Being analytical gives students a different perspective on their lives. They are able to step back and take a look at themselves and understand the experience. They are more aware and able to see the patterns in their lives; see repeating actions, responses and re-occurring problems. It becomes easier, knowing the past, to cope with the future.

Students say their journals show them aspects of themselves they could never have realized otherwise, that the journal externalizes the internal. It becomes a reference book of life, recording events otherwise lost, and saving new thoughts and ideas.

Students are always surprised at the variety of experience captured in so few months. If they have looked deeply within themselves, they are amazed at the rich inner life they live.

Academic accountability - Academic accountability of staff and students will focus on three dimensions of the program. The first focus will be on how well the program accomplishes its stated goals. The second will deal with the ways staff use their time. The third will be a narrative transcript identifying learning accomplishments written by students and verified by staff members.

1. An essential ingredient of accountability will be direct and unfiltered feedback from students. Each term students will be asked to evaluate every aspect of the program. I believe that if students know their feedback is highly valued and is used, it will have a high degree of reliability. This feedback should be central to the decision-making processes that shape policies and future programs for the *Learning Community*.

In our Life Lab system, feedback is anonymous but collated according to the staff member assigned to the student giving the feedback. Thus, staff members can compare computerized feedback from their own students with average responses from students of other staff members. Students give feedback on their perceptions of their own progress, the support or lack of support provided by Life Lab staff, as well as by Miami-Dade systems such as Audio-Visual Departments, study centers, libraries, registration, etc. In my fantasy, an equal number of students and staff work together to interpret feedback data and to suggest modifications to improve the program. By keeping all feedback public, the essential element of openness, or *transparency*, can be maintained. Persons with a concern for the integrity of the program can use this data to assess its congruity. They can decide for themselves whether or not the program does what it professes to do and if its activities have value for the student and society.

2. Since the traditional ways faculty use their time often don't fit this model, staff must find other ways to account for their work schedule. We have experimented with a computerized logging system by which staff use of time is recorded and subsequently analyzed. This documentation process accomplishes two purposes. It provides professional accountability for staff who often work in the field, in off-campus centers, and in their homes, rather than keep a schedule of on-campus classes, office hours, committee meetings, etc. This system also can provide data to show how differently staff members develop work patterns that prove equally effective for students. This allows for the validation of very diverse styles and working arrangements that, in the long run, better serve the specialized needs of adult students in widely scattered geographic locations. Computer printouts can show how much time staff members spend meeting with small groups of students, doing individual counseling, talking to students on the phone, making field trips, reviewing new tapes and other materials, reviewing student projects and journals, preparing workshops and laboratory materials, orienting new students, handling registration proceedures and record keeping, meeting with staff in planning and evaluation sessions, etc.

This accountability system for staff opens the way to create whatever use of time best meets the philosophy and goals of the program. But just as students must articulate their learning to get credit for it, staff also must account for the time and the activities they use to facilitate that learning.

3. Narrative transcripts, rather than transcripts listing only course titles and grades, have long been used by some accredited institutions such as Goddard, Friends World, Antioch, Vermont Community College, Skidmore University Without Walls, Union Graduate School, etc. The narrative transcript in my fantasy program has three specific features.

First, the transcript is written by the students themselves during the course of study. It will represent their best effort at describing the value of their learning experience - the value to themselves, and the value to potential employers or for further study in graduate school. Such transcripts, I believe, will be especially valuable to personnel managers and to admission committees for advance degrees. For students with difficulty in communication skills, the need to prepare their own transcript may motivate them to improve these skills.

2/20 Have seen and heard myself closely. I know how I put on roles and lie and try to make impressions on others. This time I watched. I am facinated with how easily it all was done. There's no judgement, just observation.

3/1 Am feeling disrupted...interfered with...kind of invaded. Guess I'm identifying with what's going on around here too much. Not enough time for being, just being. The writing's good, gets things down, makes space for what's really troubling me and it feels good! Let's see...My spaces don't seem to be as available as I need them to be. All the inbetween times of the busy times are needed by the house, kids and man...none of which seem to be reflecting much energy back to me at this point...or I don't seem to be getting it. Maybe I have to do some 'perspective work' again, it's been a while....Maybe things just need to get moved around....

3/5 Hey!-let go of things...allow it all to happen at its own pace so that you can be free to respond...

3/9 New books to buy: *Teaching Human Beings,* Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. 02108....3.45

Will The Real Teacher Stand Up?, Goodyear Pub., Co., 15115 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades, Calif. 90272.....4.95

The Only Dance There Is, Ram Dass Doubleday/Anchor, N.Y.

3/17 We are what we are by creating the kind of world we live in.

Wow.!

The "I" that feels a part of others moves as ego into the doing.

Now, what does this mean about me...

I see only partial pictures of the whole and whenever I feel really confident about anything, I guess that's a good judge that I could be totally blind about what is actually happening...like getting a clear view of one very small portion of the whole and thinking that it's the entirety....

4/ Talked with _____ today, about his fear of getting too involved with students...he said, don't you ever get too full - too burdened? And I said passively, No....it's only the 'I' that gets over filled and burdened...and accepts the responsibility that is not even mine to take.... that when the objective, observing part of me takes over, a flow happens and each 'now' feels complete and fully satisfied.....is that really how it happens? - or is it the way I *want* it to happen.....oh, Well....

A *second* feature is a plan to computerize these narrative transcripts. At any future time, students will be able to order copies of their transcripts at the cost of printing their particular transcript (a fixed fee per page.) Students also can embellish their transcript with references to other products they feel best represented their learning. These might include research reports, multi-media presentations, works of art, anything students want to present along with their transcript as evidence of their proficiency in any area.

A *third* feature is that staff members are responsible for adding an entry of their own to each transcript. This, in effect, verifies that it was written by the student and it did represent learning activities and competencies achieved by the student. The name of one or more faculty member will appear on each permanent transcript, adding, I believe, to the integrity as well as the meaningfulness of the document.

Budgetary Accountability - Primary accountability in budget matters also will be fixed at the *Learning Community* level. An accounting system will be set up by a C.P.A. who will be responsible for an annual public audit of the community's books. Checks or money orders for tuition can be collected by staff and deposited by the coordinator for the *Learning Community*.

Each payment deposited at the bank will be distributed in predetermined percentages into various operating accounts. These will include an account for the staff person assigned to the student making the payment. Other accounts will be for office expenses and coordination, support systems, evaluation and research, and for the community's fair share of costs to its affiliate institution at a state, regional, or national level.

The *Learning Community* will be encouraged to modify its own budget at any time it determines different fiscal priorities will better serve its students' needs. Dollars saved from projected budgets can accrue in an account set aside to be used for unexpected expenses, for developing new facilities and resources, and for financial aid to students.

Staff and representative students will manage the *Learning Community* as a co-op based on ecological principles. If the needs of students require expenditures larger than the existing tuition level permits, then the staff and student representatives could negotiate a raise in tuition or solicit funds from other sources. If the *Learning Community* demonstrated an ability to meet the needs of students and its own support at less than its existing budget, a decrease in tuition could be negotiated.

The co-op concept should be fostered in as many aspects of the *Learning Community's* organization as possible. Ideally, the community would contract with its affiliate institution to serve students within specified parameters. Within these parameters of philosophy, goals, fiscal procedures and maximum numbers to be served, the community would be free to "*adapt*," as Richard Cornuelle says, in "*unpredictable ways*."

As independent co-op members, core faculty would be considered as self-employed with their primary responsibility being to the students they served. The affiliate institution (possibly a state education department, a University Without Walls consortium, or a single university or college) could contract directly with the *Learning Community* as a co-op. Bureaucratic entanglements could be held to a minimum. Since the core faculty members would work as self-employed contractors, the affiliate institution would not have to be involved in payroll deductions, insurance, retirement, and other fringe benefits. The staff in a single Learning Community or in a *system* or *federation* of such communities would have the option to contract privately for group insurance and retirement as a group, or establish their own system. The instability of many large retirement systems, both public and private, justifies, I believe, placing responsibility for setting up and monitoring such plans in the hands of those who are dependent upon them.

FUNDING - How expensive would my fantasy be - To try out an experimental model? To allow one *Learning Community*, or better, one *system* of five communities, to develop around the needs of students? To set a four-year goal in which to graduate an experimental group of

59 our view

10/27 On rare occasion, an object will draw me near and offer a sort of meditation. After I have studied it from every possible angle through my mind's eye, it begins to challenge me as a photographer. Then another period of time will pass and it begs for me to affirm its presence by snapping the shutter. When this happens, I feel a good photograph will be. I feel it has offered its existence as a gift and I am only obligated to share.

The camera is a queer instrument. I know I must be tolerant, patient and observant of mood. Yet the photograph I produce is often the antithesis of the photograph I took. Oft times when I photograph a human, I discover something I never knew about them before; at other times, I merely validate something I had always known.

10/30 What a crazy week. I have started to keep track of the time left and I wonder why ... what's so different that I have to keep track now and didn't before. My relationship with ..... above anyone else takes energy. Today I question my worth to this community. What have I given and what do I give today. I try getting around to every person here; I talk to them and find out a lot too. And my argument with ..... he said I was selfish and inconsiderate. It's hard for me to know; it's hard for me to look at myself objectively and defend myself at the same time....and maybe that's a selfish act in itself. It's good for me here, I know that, but am I good for them? I feel limp and powerless. I have very little energy left. Everyone comes to me. Who do I go to? Why should I have to go to anyone anyway? So how does it feel kid ....holding onto myself is a pretty shaky thing. And I'm crawling back into a corner, and just a'crying don't do me no good.

11/11 Today is our third vacation here. I've read a book and started another ... written a few papers and took a bath. Some wonderful kidootle has built a little platform up in a tree and that's where I am right now. The temperature is somewhere in the lower thirties and, outside of my hands, I'm quite comfortable. The leaves are changing colours and have been for about three weeks now and are beginning to fall from the trees. Birds haven't gone south just yet. Canada is certainly a wonderful place. Most parts are void of human habitation and the land is rich in natural resources. Mica is a major rock and it really turns me on. I'm amazed at my adaptability. And my life is taking the shape I hoped it would. Now things seem more real...Dreams are turning into realities and I have a sense of direction. I'm so pleased. Education becomes increasingly important to me and I'm learning to read much more these days. I'm glad to be going up and down new roads and beginning to see the world. This community and Life Lab is providing me with good skills. I'm learning how to go to a new place and learn about it. I'm being turned on to available resources and how to use them. Books are becoming more important to me and virtually essential to my being. I'm learning to carve, chop wood, weave, and live with a group of people I have never met before. I feel good about me and more sure about myself. I know I can whip the grip of society. I'm finding that the lifestyle I have dreamed of is a real thing and I know that it is very possible. I'm learning that Florida just doesn't make it all year round. I'm learning how important the people I know are to me and have formed many rich relationships. I'm beginning to think that my purpose in life is people. So many folks care for me and I think it's true ... that all you need is love. Life is so so so incredible. The world is right here under my feet and time doesn't wait. Perpetual motion all around me and inside me. I'm a fraction of this planet, a particle of the universe ... and I'll always go on living.

Today the world - tomorrow I'll sleep late.

students? To test and compare in the most rigorous manner possible this experimental group with matched sample groups of graduates from both traditional and other non-traditional models? (This comparison, I think, should use traditional measures like the Graduate Record Exam, as well as measures of general student satisfaction and relevance of education to competencies needed in day-to-day living.)

I know of two approaches to testing the model.

1. *First* is the traditional approach to setting up nontraditional educational programs. It begins with a request for a state appropriation or a federal grant to do planning. Planning culminates inevitably in a design and a budget to operate the bureaucracy that will operate an experimental nontraditional pilot model. If requests for funding are successful, a director and a staff are hired. They do more planning and then purchase equipment and supplies, and obtain facilities called for in their plan. In the several models I have seen develop this way, there seem to be at least two predictable outcomes:

OUTCOME A - The expected economies of the innovative model evaporate, and it turns out to cost about the same as the traditional model.

OUTCOME B - When the new model is finally exposed to the real students it has planned to serve, the need for major modifications suddenly becomes apparent to fit the reality of the situation.

This process exemplifies, I believe, the classic *trickle down* model for launching a new program. The bureaucracy is established first. Immediately, its own survival becomes inseparable from its legitimate goals. Resources *trickle down* through its organizational layers, nourishing first the bureaucracy. Those resources left at the bottom of the hierarchy are used for whatever function the organization is supposed to carry out.

The reason one system ends up costing about the same as another, I believe, is that traditional bureaucracies cost about the same to operate. They have a sponge-like quality that continues to absorb more and more resources. The maximum saturation point of a bureaucracy managing nontraditional education doesn't vary much from a bureaucracy managing a traditional program.

2. The second approach to testing a new model is the one used by Tom Fryer in launching Life Lab. The essence of that model is to hold off organizing a management system as long as possible. Whoever has the authority to do so, grants permission to someone who has an idea to try it out. Instead of developing large grant proposals to do planning, the *idea people* are given freedom to demonstrate in minature how their ideas work.

This process can lead to a *bubble up* system of management. Moderate resources are applied to a specific task. The initial idea gets modified by its exposure to the give and take of real life situations with students from the very beginning. *Reality testing* and *action research* are terms for this concept that have been used by educational planners a long time. Yet it is surprising how seldom these concepts seem to get applied in the creation of new educational models.

When an experiment proves successful, then the process of *bubbling up* a management system can begin. Administrative authority can be kept at the basic unit which carries out the function of the organization. Management functions can be delegated upward to serve the growing, system-wide needs for coordination and support. Care can be exercised to avoid bureaucractic imperatives that value survival of the system more than efficient performance of its legitimate functions. With the focus on task, it should be possible to build in processes for change and even self-destruct rituals to continually renew the organizational structures.

If all this sounds like a mixture of *educanese* and *administrese* it's because, as Hayakawa points out, I am trapped by my own language. Now I will try to put into simple words what it would cost for an institution to try out an experimental model of my *bubble up* fantasy.

It would cost nothing. We would simply establish the same ground rule that Tom Fryer did for the Life Lab experiment - it would have to pay its own way from the start.

3/15 Couldn't resist these "Watt's Words"....we are what we are by creating the kind of world that we think we live in - *ha! - that's really fine*.....the brain, the nervous system, evokes the world, but is also something in the world. The world is what your brain evokes.....the world isn't complicated at all. What is complicated is the attempt to translate the world into linear symbols.....our technology is basically a mistrust of nature.....we think we are our opinion of ourselves, our image of ourselves and therefore feel reduced to linear symbolism....and that's a kind of strung out, skinny thing.... *boy does that feel familiar*.....hanging onto one's self is self strangulation. When you see that the whole point to this life is THIS MOMENT....

I find myself running out of interesting things. After re-reading my old journals, I find some of them boring. I guess I have a dull life.

Dear Journal - I wish there were some way to tell you how I feel today.

How can I explain the value and importance of a trip into the woods with nothing but an obsese pack on my back, a half ragged walking stick, and a dirty dog? It was truly beautiful... the first time I had ever been into the woods by myself. I was so small, barely anthing, in a world that I had never experienced before in my life ... the aloneness, the awareness, the alert mind and body, the rhyth of my body and the earth, the real earth, the strangely silent and wonderous beauty of something that seems almost surrealistic, what so many men call reality is only a strung out myth. The city we live in is not real ... this machine is not real, this paper is not truly real ... I experienced the only real thing in the world this week-end.

We live in the city, the city is a mass of dreams that men have created. Some of them have proceeded with tremendous amounts of success ... big fucking deal. The woods have been around longer than any men or any dreams for that matter. We came, we destroyed with out dreams, we created wars, better ways ... and better ways to better the better ways, better way to better the better way to better ways, and so on, and destroying nature and creating insanity among millions of people including me. So now, we are working on higher levels of consciousness so we can become oblivious to the problems we have created. Just wait until someone finds out that higher levels of consciousness are hazardous to your health!!! Nature will clear it up and we probably won't be around to see it because we'll be on a spaceship to another planet to plant dreams. Now, if you'll excuse me, I must go read the paper to find out what's happening ....

Today I saw my son walk for the first time... What a thrill!

I cannot bring myself to write my feelings down, to let it all out. I guess in a way I don't want *anyone* to remember, not even me. You see, the way I look at it, if I don't put it down, I'll soon forget. And maybe it'll be better that I forget, but then there are some things worth pondering on. So I guess this is how my journal has helped me. It has forced me to write some of these things down...and reading it over, well, maybe it is a good thing after all, Re-calling.

9:00 AM Drove to Work
9:30 - 4 Work
5:00 - 7 Home & Dinner
7:30 - 10:30 Peer Grp.

Is There More?

Then, how much would it cost the student in tuition for such a bachelor degree model to pay its own way? I believe it would cost students between $1,200 and $1,500 a year tuition to launch an experimental system of *Learning Communities*. This tuition would allow students to study and earn credit for a full 52 weeks, rather than for the traditional *academic year* of two semesters or three quarters (approximately 32 weeks.)

A *Learning Community* would create its own income, and a maximum budget of between $192,000 and $240,500 per year (tuition from 160 students.) The community would *bubble up* a percentage of its income for its affiliate, or sponsoring institution, to monitor, do research and evaluate its programs. If the experiment were allowed to develop five federated learning communities (a maximum of 800 students), the *bubble up* budget for monitoring, evaluating and research could amount to between $60,000 and $80,000 per year. Some of this amount could be designated to finance future comparative testing between graduates from the experimental program and matched samples from other existing programs.

From my experience in Life Lab and my exposure to other nontraditional programs, I believe graduates from the model proposed here would equal or outperform average graduates from traditional bachelor degree programs on both the Graduate Record Exam and on measures of relevance of education to life.

This does not mean that the educational needs of all, or even most, students could adequately be served by such nontraditional models. The traditional university and college should remain, I believe, the strong backbone of the educational system. Its specialized resources, laboratory setting, research capabilities, and focus on academically gifted students, all contribute to a heightened appreciation and application of *scholarship*. Without this concern for *scholarship* and the contributions it makes to society, all of us would be poorer.

However, requiring this vastly more sophisticated and expensive model as the only acceptable one for earning needed and deserved credentials by adult students can work to the detriment of the traditional educational system itself. The result can be such a strain on financial resources and on the patience of potential students not being served (who also are taxpapers and voters), that traditional institutions may find their own acceptance rapidly diminishing. Such a mood is foreshadowed in *tax payer revolts* when educational bond issues are defeated at the polls and state legislators increasingly turn down budgets from university systems.

FANTASY #3:

A Community of Faculty That Lives As Well As Teaches An Ecologically Based Curriculum

By an ecologically based curriculum I don't mean one for park rangers, professional ecologists, and environmental engineers. They would benefit from it, but so would businesspersons, politicians, medical technicians, building tradespersons, clerical workers, teachers, mechanics, physicians, home makers, etc.

The "ecology base" has to do with basic realities of life, with *ultimates*, such as the meaning we get out of our lives, out of our jobs, and our relationships. As well as the *ultimate* balance of life, itself; of the survival of that life, as we know it.

The curriculum would be practised as well as taught. It would be, in my model, the living out of a set of principles by both staff and students. But any group from any vocation could

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JULIAN'S MANFESTO

by Julian Ortiz

Here I am, on the first day of July, about three weeks before the end of the term, and with nothing tangible to show as my learning process for this time period; and by tangible I mean those written requirements which are, supposedly, the total sum of my learning experience and the measure of my growth. But, does this mean that I have learned nothing, that I have been stagnant in my growth? Oh, how do we mistake the means with the end . . . the ways with the goal! Even though it is true that I cannot turn in these papers and say this is me, indeed, I can say that these past two months have been of the utmost relevance to my life! I have found myself, even to the awareness of the remotest corner of my conscious self. I am not the same, nor will I be the same again.

So many things have passed that it really seems as though it all started long, long ago. Somehow, I started seeing other people as if looking at myself through them. Their happiness sent me high, and the pain I suffered, their childness (the quality of being able to possess, even momentarily, the rare and beautiful qualities of a child) I enjoyed, and their emotions became mine. I have fallen in love, in love with life, with myself and others. There has been a communion between me and Creation.

I used to say that intelligence was a function of independence. How could I have been so wrong? I don't want to be independent. I am totally and irrevocably dependent on everything else. Without everything, I am nothing, for what could I call myself -- in comparison to what? I only exist through others -- and *in* them. This is indeed a wonderful and beautiful experience! Love is, without doubt, the mover of life. And as all are dependent on each other, I am dependent on all. They move me -- and I move them. We become one.

In Life Lab I had the chance to really relate with other human beings, honestly, from self to self, and this magnifies as time goes by. I am more aware of them and so of myself. I have made beautiful and meaningful friendships. My relationship with my wife, which lacked in communication, is taking a more honest, objective, loving, individual course. It is like looking at life for the first time; like looking at it through a glass of a different color. Everything about me is brighter, and their vibrations reach me in a warm soft, caressing way.

I chose not to write about my feelings in the process of this realization. I rather chose to feel. I did not want to stop and analyze my emotions, my change. I wanted them to happen, to feel it happening. To feel my energy flowing and reaching out was my main concern. I learned a lot about myself and others. I learned that if we just didn't analyze the other person as much, we would start seeing ourselves in them. Just to feel with them was enough to know where they were "at" . . . and I was there too.

So, what is the difference if I wrote day by day my experiences or not? After all, does it matter? Are they to be the measure of my stature? Are they to be the criteria by which to judge my learning involvement? I am alive, and I stand high, very high, thanks to having given all of myself to experiencing my feelings. This, is the important thing.

Now, from the point where I am now, I think it would even be helpful to start my journal. I have arrived. Now, I can see where I am . . . and analyze it (just a little).

Love means the same and *is the same despite time and space, for love is beyond dimension. Love is the main ingredient in the cup of Life, of which I only wet my lips . . . and I feel so high. I am drunk with Life . . and Love.*

Afterward: There is no way to confine or define learning . . . especially in advance of its happening. A former Life Lab student makes this point in the preceding manifesto. While the manifesto protests the "need" for documentation, it was the beginning of Julian's documentation; which, incidentally, he did complete. He graduated and subsequently enrolled in the External Degree Program at Florida International University.

create their own model. Some existing experiments in communal living, and worker and consumer cooperatives already are teaching us better stewardship of our resources and how to better live together in mutually supportive ways.

The fantasy I will describe is an attempt to bring together three components of classical American entrepreneurship needed for creating a *going business*. My need is to add another dimension to the business potential. That is a consciousness of one's work, or one's business, as much more than an economic end in itself.

The three essential components, in this case, are:

1. **A market** - There are many potential students in South Florida who would choose nontraditional models for continuing their education if given their choice.
2. **A supplier** - There exist accredited institutions of higher education with organizational resources and authority for providing outreach centers to meet the needs of such a clientel.
3. **A skilled labor supply** - There are qualified and credentialed faculty ready to participate in organizing and conducting a nontraditional educational program that will meet the needs of these potential students.

In the following model, I will sketch how ecological principles would be expressed in the economic life of the staff, and in the peer support and management responsibilities of the students.

As outlined in Fantasy #2, the business operation of the *Learning Community* would be organized as a not-for-profit educational co-op. When new students bought into the co-op, they would know the various services they were purchasing with each dollar of their tuition payments. They also would buy into responsibility for serving as a resource for other students, and to participate in a representative management system for the co-op.

One proposed experimental model would have a tuition of $1500 for a 52-week study contract year. Of this amount, $600 would be budgeted for services of a core faculty member. The faculty member usually would work with peer groups of 7 to 12 students and serve as a mentor-consultant for each. Staff members joining the co-op would buy into the organizational policies which follow. However, once the co-op was operational, staff members and student representatives could modify any policies. Policy changes could be made by a three fourths vote of faculty and student representatives. Faculty working with fewer than 12 students would have one vote. Faculty with 12 to 23 students would have two votes, and faculty with 24 or more students would have three votes. The full-time Learning Community Coordinator also would have three votes. Students would have the option to select up to one voting representative for every 12 registered students.

Following is the policy that determines the distribution of the $600 that students pay for core faculty support:

FIRST YEAR CO-OP CORE FACULTY MEMBERS:

* $300 is desposited in a personal drawing account for the faculty member. Faculty members can draw out as income funds from their personal account. At the end of each year, they can draw out any balance, or they can make a tax deductable gift to the co-op of any portion remaining.
* $300 is deposited in the co-op Development Account, and the staff member is credited with a $300 tax deductible contribution. This fund will be used only for capital expenses for developing the co-op and for co-op nonprofit community service projects. It would not be used for educational support costs of students or staff. Faculty members would have no claim on these funds, other than as voting members of the co-op in setting priorities for their use.

CORE FACULTY MEMBERS ON THE CO-OP STAFF ONE OR MORE YEARS:

* $300 is deposited in a personal drawing account for the faculty member just as before.

STEFI ADLER

THOUGHTS ON A STUDY PLAN

Something is bothering me and I think it is the fact that I have to make up this silly thing called a Study Plan. I know, I know, I promised myself that I would not cop out of the Game. I have full intentions to play by the rules (alright, so they'll have to bend a little) by giving the System whatever it needs for nourishment, but right now I don't feel like it. That means a great deal to me. I am uncomfortable.

The study plan is a simple one:

Recognize the Games.
Establish knowledge of the Rules of Play.
Become flexible enough to be able to play on all sides.
Consider the Games for what they represent:
Why are there games; are they important;
do I care; of what value are they;
whose idea are they anyway, etc....

When I first began thinking about a study plan for the semester, I must admit that it was a little more than I had anticipated. Normally, it would have been quite enough to have outlined competency goals -- compare this philosophy to that, this style of writing to that, etc., but somehow I have gotten a little side-tracked into actually going beyond form into substance. Perhaps that is what it is all about, anyway.

I have learned that the progress I have made was due to the journey itself. I know, for example, that I have had to make mistakes in order to move from one point to another and that, without having made the error in judgement, I would not have understood that there was another alternative to my way of perception. I have also learned that I must play a lot more. I used to think that the goals of this term would be just to figure out about the Games; I have moved farther and faster than I expected, because now I have moved from the recognition of the rules of play right on to different game levels, different rewards, different ways of thinking about my self.

I have learned that Games have been the topic of thought for a long time. Some folks approach them more directly than others. The main thing, I believe, is to maintain a proper perspective of what is going on in my particular game enough to a) allow others to play their own games without interference from me (oh, how it comes back at me) and to b) exercise a sense of humour about it.

So, in effect, the philosophy courses have shown me several alternative ways of viewing the Games, from not realizing that there are Games at all, to mapping out the progressions in a clear and lucid fashion. The points are well-taken occasionally, but it still comes down to the personal Game that makes living intriguing.

I have been doing a bit of reading about the development of the human animal for some time. The conclusions that have stood the test of time (for me, that is) are few, and not too original, I'm afraid, but they are conclusions that I have reached without a great deal of formal training, perhaps a redeeming factor in the long run...I will not have academi-itis to suffer. So far I have recognized two prevalent paths of thought which tend to explain why we think of things the way most of us do, and in addition, how we think of things, at all. The first conclusion is concerned with fundamental differences in the way the animal human sees his relationship with the World. In the East, so far the oldest on-going civilization(s), it appears that man has not considered himself anything other than a part of the whole. As reflected in simple examples, he has not wished to control his physical realities (air conditioning, electricity, pesticides, birth control, etc.) but has been content to be a part of the scheme of things, even if it has meant his own end. What is in Nature is to Be, and what is to Be is Nature. However, in

* $150 is deposited in the co-op Development Account as a tax deductable contribution.
* $150 is deposited in the co-op Community Service Account. This amount then would appear as a $150 credit for the staff member for services offered by the co-op. The Community Service Account could support such services as a Natural Foods Wholesale Outlet, a Natural Health Care Center, a Community Organic Garden, a Pre-school Care Center, etc. As staff members used these community services, the costs would be charged to their account. Unused credits at the end of each year could be carried over as taxable income and used the next year, or the balance could be contributed as a tax deductible donation to the co-op.

Second year full-time core faculty members working with a maximum load of 32 students could generate a potential of $19,200 for themselves and the co-op. Of this amount, they could draw up to $9,600 in cash and up to $4,800 in goods and services. The $4,800 balance would be their input into the ecology of the co-op community and its environment. For developmental projects, the co-op might experiment with a variety of nonprofit services or business ventures its members believed would be beneficial. The co-op also might offer direct aid in emergency relief situations, or it might sponsor research in alternative energy systems or work on solutions to other ecological problems.

If a *federation* of five *Learning Communities* developed into an ecologially based educational *system*, as suggested in Fantasy #2, each community could develop its own model and priorities for projects. Some *Learning Communities* might want to experiment with total sharing of all income and communal residential facilities. Others might want to maintain maximum autonomy for individuals, sharing only to meet mutual needs and to increase their ecological input to solve environmental problems.

Two other items for Co-op staff support should be budgeted as basic costs out of each student's annual tuition payment. In my model, these would be:

1. *First*, $125 would be allotted to pay for the services of a coordinator for the *Learning Community*. A full-time coordinator for a community with 160 students would generate the same income for the Co-op as a full-time core faculty member with 32 students. Distribution of income and goods and services to the coordinator would be on the same basis as for core faculty members.

   The coordinator would be selected by the core faculty members and student representatives for whatever term and by whatever procedure (selection, consensus, etc.) the community decided to use.

2. *Second*, $25 out of each annual tuition payment would provide for services of a system-wide coordinator for five *Learning Communities*. For the initial *Learning Communities*, this fund would be used as "seed money" for establishing additional communities before the existing ones reached their maximum capacity of 160 students. For a mature *system* with five *Learning Communities*, this support money would also generate the same income for the Co-op as a full-time faculty member. Again, distribution of this income to the coordinator would be the same. The *System's* coordinator would be selected by the coordinators of the participating *Learning Communities*. The communities would establish the policies for such selection. The fee would provide for a part-time System's coordinator until a full *System* developed.

   If the educational Co-op associates itself with a sponsoring, accredited institution for the purpose of giving degrees, the coordinators nominated by staff and students would have to be acceptable to the institution.

New *Learning Communities* would be "seeded" when one or more core faculty members were authorized by an existing community to pioneer a new one. Part of the seeding agreement

the Western civilizations it has been more profitable, both economically and socially in the short run, to have a say-so in what is part of reality -- we don't like the locusts, so let us kill them all; we need more fuel, so let us rape the earth; we want fewer individuals, so let us control the populations, etc. One sees differences coming into focus -- one way of thinking is from the outside in and the other is from the inside out.

I used to think that Leo Buscaglia was an OK guy. I still do, really, but now I am afraid that I am a little more pessimistic about his philosophy for the masses. I don't know for sure, but after listening and reading Alan Watts' thoughts, it might be that love is usually an on-off relationship with one other human being simply because the beast cannot be wiggly enough to know that his contact with another is just like a computer data feed-in. If he were able to cope with things as wiggly as they really may be, he might then also realize higher realities of how one person (such a concept) feels and reacts to another. That is man's response-ability; and if I were to open that door and plummet in, there would be worlds to explore...

Even physically,reality is a myth.Our perceptions are limited; we only know what we are able to experience, and that is often so small that we think that we actually understand anything.

What does encourage me, however, is the awakening to the awareness of others. If, in fact, we all perceive things from our own individuality, then the humour of the universe is not lost. Why am I not everyone else, not anyone else, but everyone else. Well, perhaps I am. Could it be that, just as each cell in the body functions within its own circle of life and death and doing-being independently from my spirit, that each one of us is only doing-being in relationship to the higher consciousness? That may be more like it. But, again, is it true that my spirit-mind-soul has no control over my tiny cells and their molescules and their atoms and their nucleii and their quarks, etc.

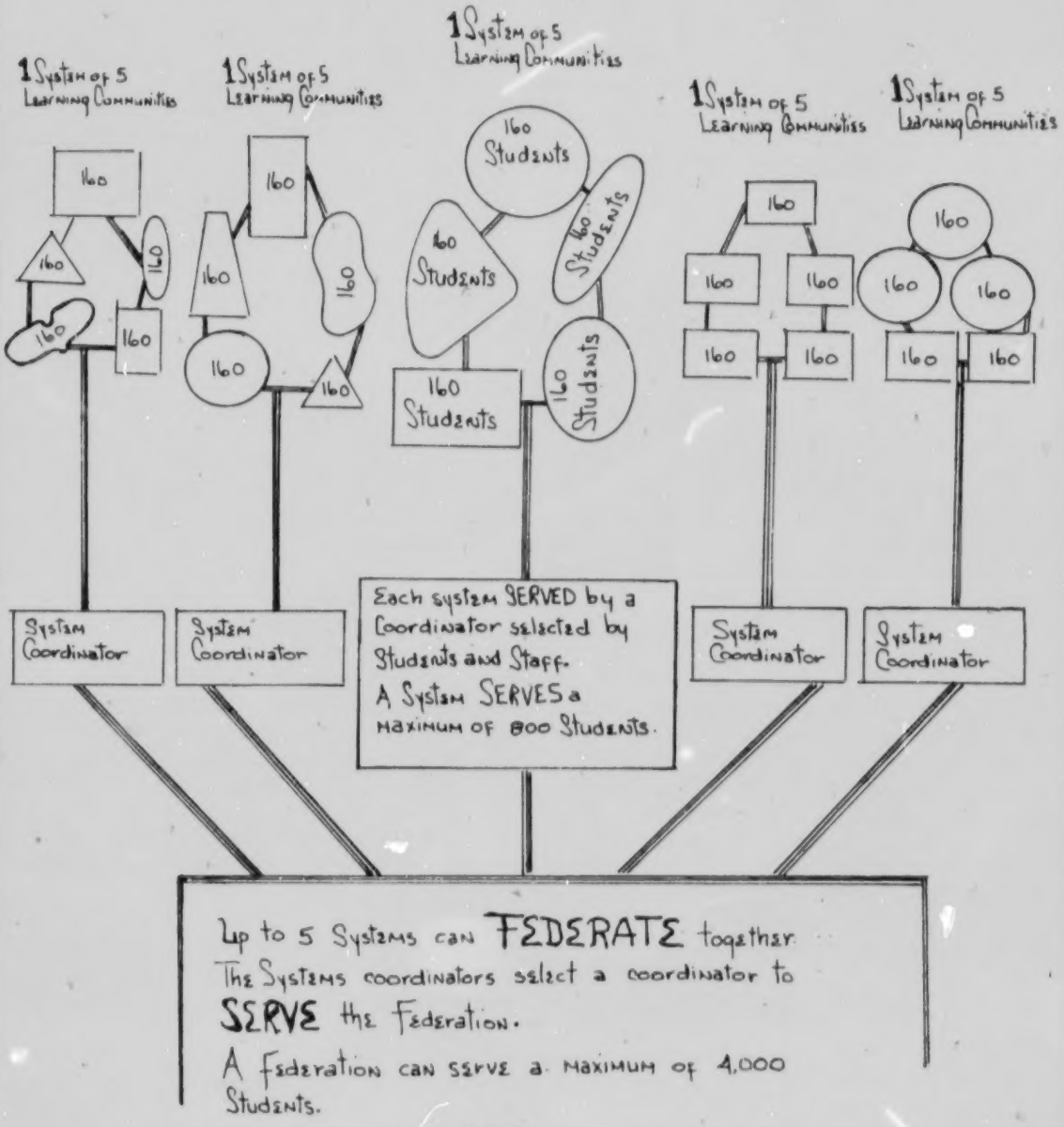
If the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, then what is the whole, who is it, why is it? Am I not the whole and the parts? Am I? What is the essence of the concept "to Be"? I toyed with the idea of the verb "to Be," which is not found in every language. In Hebrew, for example, there is no such thing; the verb "to Be," is understood. That is very heavy. "Of course 'to Be;' what else is new..."? But in most other languages (verbal) words serve to identify and capture essences of Being into little boxes. By establishing a word to convey a concept, the concept is taken out of the flow of all things interrelating into a shadow that is impossible to express. How silly, then, to question "To be or not to be."

Where am I coming from with regard to Life Lab and a "study-plan?" I entered the hallowed halls at one of those oft-desired spaces in one's life, although rarely achieved by most, that of realizing a possibility of a new beginning, a state of had-I-only-known-then-what-I-know-now and being aware that it might be so "for real." My perceptions had just begun to crack the doors and open the windows to a world that was both familiar and yet not; I was in search of the keys to unlock myself. Fortunately, I selected subject areas in Life Lab that were compatible with my day-to-day experiences. (I should retract the "Fortunately" -- I think I am beginning to realize what that means.) What are these areas concerned with? For the most part, answers out of perceptions, experiences, expansion dealing with all the questions that I have always asked, the questions that Man has asked for generations uncounted, the questions to which there are no answers, only guesses, some good, some not so good. I was looking for an area of reinforcement for my own thoughts on such matters when Life Lab said to me, "Kid, don't you known?"

When this year began, so did my experience with Life Lab. Even though registration was months away, I began my journey independently through the journal; how artificial it would be if learning only occurred between arbitrary dates. My intent, at the outset, was to get in touch with my feelings. This effort has been worthwhile for several reasons, particularly because I have been able to find patterns in my activities both academic and spiritual. By the time Life Lab entry had been accomplished, I was ready to pursue these patterns in relations to the subject areas that I had selected, which were quite compatible with my life interests.

would be to immediately establish methods for coordinating the required on-going evaluation and self-assessment procedures of the community. All assessment data such as computerized student feedback, faculty time-use logs, student study plans and final reviews, etc. should be generated and distributed on a *system-wide* basis.

Mature *Systems* nearing their maximum of 800 students could be authorized through their institutional affiliation (such as with a single college or university, a state system, a consortium, a regional accrediting association, etc.) to "seed" new *Learning Communities* for the purpose of beginning another *System*. A *Federation* of five such *Systems* could serve a maximum of 4,000 students and represents, in this model, the maximum size unit for administrative coordination.


1 System of 5 Learning Communities
1 System of 5 Learning Communities
1 System of 5 Learning Communities
1 System of 5 Learning Communities
1 System of 5 Learning Communities
160 Students
System Coordinator
System Coordinator
System Coordinator
System Coordinator
Each system SERVED by a Coordinator selected by Students and Staff.
A System SERVES a maximum of 800 Students.
Up to 5 Systems can FEDERATE together.
The Systems coordinators select a coordinator to SERVE the Federation.
A Federation can serve a maximum of 4,000 Students.

The subject areas that were chosen for my attention were quite interrelated, occasionally causing me a bit of confusion when it was "time" to isolate the learning experiences into their little pigeon-holes. Life Lab should be flexible enough, however, to bend with my general intentions during this growing period, rather than to corner me into dividing the greater whole into merely its parts.

Philosophy, religion, imaginative writing are all aspects of a very similar ball. When I began researching for the definitions of particular areas, I found that the essential questions are approached in such diverse methods that it has amazed me that communication exists at all, in fact, I wonder if it does. For example, religions center about the relationship betwen God and Man, and in that relationship, trying to define not only what is the "right" way to live one's life, but more, how to get that which is necessary from sources outside his own experience, i.e., how to please God and carry on day-to-day affairs. This used to be almost one concept, because folks had very little else to occupy themselves with other than ridding themselves of so many pestilences, getting the basics of survival and going to the local God representative and finding out the Method for Today. In the East, Man was more or less content to let Nature go about the business of naturing, whether or not it meant personal annihilation, because Nature exists and Manis a part of the total existence. In the East, therefore, religions dealt less with a single deity and more with polyanthropormorphic forces, still not challenging Nature, but merely trying to get along with it following the lines of least resistance.

My goals in both philosophy courses were interrelated on a personal level. It was not sufficient to study minutae that wrinkles the complexions of the various approaches to Man's attempt to place himself in the Universe; my searching was focused on the basic issues that are labeled as THE ANSWER to all the questions. I didn't care so much about how many times a day one must express his piety, rather what is happening to him when he does it. Why is he doing it, does it make any difference, does it change anything, what is it worth... In the West, it seems that all that occurs is from Without, and Man is trying to control the vastness of Nature by attempting to bend it to his convenience, be it weather, disease, economy or spiritualality, his self-image. In the East, I have noticed an attempt at laissez-faire with regard to the forces surrounding life. The similarity that strikes me first, however, is that in both approaches there is a discipline, a ritual, a repeated sequence of events that Man uses a tool to reach whatever level is necessary for him. How odd that seems, when it looks (from my eyes), no matter the origin, that the Games will go on despite Man's attempts, not because of him. The patterns emerge, sometimes in obvious manners, progressing into more subtle games, but they are games and both philosophy courses have led me to areas where there have been signs that showed me how to identify the games for what they are. In the States, for example, the religion of the masses is economy; there are certain disciplines, rituals if you will, that demand the attention of the devout; if one displeases the gods one shall surely suffer dire consequences. Money gives one an identity and a set of values by which life must be run, just as the Bible has laws that govern other levels of existence. The thing to remember, though, is that Money is more the lived-by philosophy than is the Bible, in every day life.

Actually, I was looking for myself in those early days, trying to recognize the me in me, be it ego or soul or a multiplicity of aspects. I wanted to define something, because that would make things "easier" for me to cope with. That was fine until I found out, through exposure to other time-tested games, that there isn't just one game; there are games within games and every person sees his own game from a different perspective. Intellectually I may have understood such a concept, but all of a sudden I was hit with a gut-level response when it all began to sink in. There are no answers, there are only questions..... Why? Why not?

Could this be the beginning of my study plan?

PART 13

A PERSONAL LEARNING CONTRACT I PLAN TO FULFILL

If I want to design and teach an ecologically sound curriculum in which students learn to *put into* systems more than they *take out*, I will have to practise it myself.

If I take my own beliefs seriously, I will have to be willing to take the consequences of living by them.

The consequences in this case, will certainly create significant changes in my own "life style." The curriculum I am proposing is not one that can be taught out of books and kept *safely* in the realm of abstract ideas.

The curriculum, itself, is based on two simple beliefs:

First, I believe we are almost all addicts. The drug we are addicted to is that of *affluence*. I don't mean this as a metaphor. Our addiction is real. We willingly sacrifice our psyches for junk, and we steal the very necessities of life from our children. We daily are shown irrefutable evidence of the disasters created by our addiction. Yet, we continue blindly to rob and maim others and poison and shorten our lives to achieve a short-lived "high." As we achieve each new level of *affluence*, its advertised euphoria evaporates, and junkies on TV and other media hold up new "highs" in a make-believe standard of living to shoot for.

Second, I believe we each have the power to say *no* to our addiction. We can let go our habituated needs, and allow our own sense of values to grow. As with all addicts, the immediate consequences can seem catastrophic. To see through my addiction means I have to find a new identity for myself. I have to find meaning in my own existence, apart from all the temporary props that I have taught myself are the things worth living for. To see through my addiction also means I must act responsibly as one individual, and I can no longer excuse my own acts of insensitivity and stupidity by the fact that others act that way, or even that society expects it, or that the economy depends upon it.

An obvious, yet blinding, result of our addiction is the imbalance created by our one-sided relationship to nature. The exploitiveness of this relationship is so ingrained in our institutions and "life style," that the resulting one-sided energy drain is the very thing that keeps the wheels of our society turning. I believe we have the power to determine a more balanced relationship for ourselves, and we can refuse to take part in any further exploitation. To do so, we have to be willing to accept what from our present *affluent* perspective may appear to be immense inconveniences.

What would we be trading our world of "conveniences" for? At the most basic level, I believe we would be getting in return a world that made more sense - a new set of relationships that worked both for us and for a balanced ecology on earth. We would be "at home" in the world. Perhaps, then, our sense of alienation, our separateness, our meaningless (and meanness) might also abate.

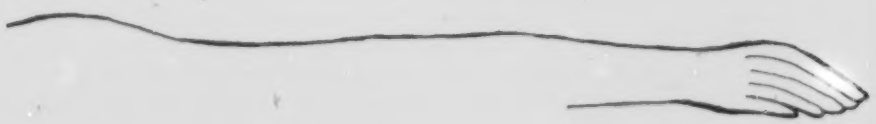
The curriculum I propose to practise is not designed to teach a romantic "return to nature" ethic. My goal is to enable us to know our addictions, to become clear about the consequences of our actions, and to take responsibility for balancing the amount we *take* with the input we *give;* so that our being in the world, at least, will enrich ever so slightly our environment, rather than deplete it.

The curriculum I want to practise will require me to examine my own "life style" as it relates to environmental concepts at many levels.

Beginning with externals, I will work on ways to assess how often my *taking* is balanced by my *giving* in my work, my family relations, my community, and my use of resources. No "extenuating circumstances," no "necessary" conveniences can justify addictions that blind me to the destructiveness I help to perpetuate.

65 our view

JUNE GREEN



JUNE GREEN, A LIFE LAB STUDENT, HAD DEEP CONCERNS THAT LIFE LAB GENERATED UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS WHICH STUDENTS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO 'HANDLE'. MAC ASKED HER TO SHARE THEM. HERE IS HER MEMO:

Well,

What has happened here?

I meant completely all of my reservations about goal realities as they related to (or seemed to be missing from) Life Lab. I felt these reservations deeply enough to discuss them with Les and then with Mac. I was able to explain these reservations and concerns in a paper to Mac, enough for him to encourage me to pursue the direction of a "reality" session to be incorporated into the Life Lab term.

And now, I am beginning to think that it was just a personal plateau that I was working through and not a problem of Life Lab as an educating force at all. Perhaps I just didn't understand the subtleties of change.

My concern had been that the great emphasis on self-actualization was disruptive and unreal in relation to actual possibilities, and that people would be in for tremendous disappointments when the inspiration they were getting from Life Lab fell flat on its face in view of the realities of the world (unemployment, actual abilities, existing personal liabilities such as race, sex or appearance). Or, people might be moved to make changes in their marital status or life-style and realize after the fact that these changes were not really good ones, and they still had their own selves to live with. In other words, I felt a concern that Life Lab was attempting to be too therapeutic in facilitating the possibilities of change without the "brakes" (pun intended) of reality being operational.

Well, this is now a few weeks later. My own perception of what change involves has changed. My own appraisal of people's ability to handle it has changed. My understanding that my previous reaction was probably a step in my own growth process and my worries were most likely induced by my personal response to change for me rather than actual concern for others in the group. They were my "symbol."

I realize now, people don't need to be protected and that's what I seemed to be trying to do. I felt motherly. A need to buffer some of the members of our group. What I really was feeling was a need to guard myself from over-reacting to my own new awareness. And I realize EACH of us--every human being--must have the privilege of floating or sinking within our own perceptions.

CHANGE began with unrest for me. I didn't like me for what I saw, allowing myself to be a secondary person. A non-person almost. I felt put down, devoid of personality and achievement, and apart from people. And I felt put upon.

I rebelled. On one hand, I had delusions of grandeur. I felt outside influences kept me from fulfilling goals. On the other hand, I experienced fear of failure. What if I tried to be "something" and failed?

I was fortunate enough to have three weeks of relative solutude to explore myself, with books (recommended by Life Lab) by Rogers, Schutz and others. In that time I also had the opportunity of participating in a social and business situation by myself... and found I was an acceptable person on my own and didn't need to depend on Al to vitalize a social evening or clarify a business meeting. I learned my shortcomings in these things too, and realized what needed working on and what I didn't care to work on.

I believe that my search for ecological balance in my own life can be a *freeing* experience, rather than a morbid exercise in self-blame.

I am not *free*, as long as to meet my needs I consciously or unconsciously must drain energy from others, accumulate debts my children must pay, or use natural resources that can not be replaced. To the degree my actions leave the world poorer than I found it, I am bound by a spiritual indebtedness that no amount of social or economic "success" can shake free.

This indebtedness does not go away merely because we do not understand it in a rational way. It is the same kind of indebetedness heroin addicts owe their drug. It is the same total allegiance that blinds them to their own dehumanization.

Understanding my "spiritual indebtedness," *my out-of-balancedness* with my own nature, I believe is essential to freeing myself from any addiction. And it is my own addictions I must work on, not yours or anybody else's.

It seems to me, this is the most important concept to understand. I do not think anyone can catalog all the addictions of *affluence* that everyone else must swear off of, *or else*.

For instance, at a very elementary level, the continued use of irreplaceable fossil fuels may be perfectly justifiable in some circumstances and an "inexcusable" addiction in others.

I must learn for myself what is right for me. In effect, as a species, we must learn to live within our means. But the unique and wonderful dimension of being human is I don't have to wait for others to change, to give up their addictions and evolve in new directions of balanced and more meaningful lives.

As the basis for a curriculum, this search provides endless levels on which we can pursue our own evolution. And in so doing, we each become "teachers." We *become*, as Ram Dass says, the curriculum itself. We begin *living* the future and *acting* for humanity. And this should be the central purpose of the academic community, according to *Change* Magazine editors in "The American Agenda."

I believe this curriculum of self-discovery and harmony with one's total environment is what we began struggling to describe in the early documents we wrote about Life Lab. In our first program description, we said that getting yourself "together" was a major goal. This meant "to achieve a better understanding of yourself in relationship to your *social environment*, your *physical environment*, your *biological and emotional processes*, and life's *ultimate values and realities*."

For some five years I have been studying this curriculum with my students. I think I am just now beginning to understand it. Gradually, almost without being aware of the fact, I have begun living parts of it in a fragmented way.

My own addictions are starting to come into focus for me. As I see myself better in relationship to my environment, my own "life style" has begun to change. If you have read most of "my view" of Life Lab's development, you may have noticed some of my changes.

I resigned as the Life Lab division director, chiefly, to continue this process of change and to complete our grant with this book. I have let go my addiction for meat as I came to believe a diet of vegetables, fruits, grains, and milk products *for me* was more healthy and more ecologically sound. I have come to believe that I must consciously take more responsibility for my physical, mental, and emotional health; and I have begun developing *my own* regimen for caring for myself. In exchange for the little time it takes daily, this regimen makes me feel more alert and balanced, and I believe in some ways I am healthier at 50 than I was at 45. I use less gasoline by driving my car less, and when I do drive I am conscious I am wasting a valuable commodity for future generations in order to provide myself with the convenience of high speed, private transport. I ride a bicycle more, and I know the pleasure of getting places slower under my own power and also the increase in awareness I feel as I travel without a box of steel and glass closing me in. I am reading old favorites like Thoreau, Emerson, and Tagore again, as well as new favorites like Schumacher, Cornuelle, and Persig. From every page, I think I hear confirmation

I rid myself of feeling guilty about my attitudes toward others. It took me a long time (it seemed like a long time but I realize now it was only a little more than three months) to then be able to integrate responsibly towards others' feelings and needs back into my own person. But now, this comes from a different point of view. It is not an obligation. It is not from duty or guilt, but rather from empathy and caring. This is a tremendous and very pleasing change. I now do things for people because it makes me and them feel good. And what I do is more effective because of this attitude change.

Currently, I am at peace. I have set some specific goals that I believe fit into my reality. These are things I believe will satisfy me, are achievable, and will not disrupt my family, for which I have gained a renewed value. At my depths, I didn't know how important they were to me.

And I realize too, in relation to my classmates, that they are **entitled** to make discoveries on **their** own, and they will handle them, sometimes OK, sometimes not so OK...but that is theirs...and it is not for me or anyone to protect them or set their limits for them.

A big personal change, also , is realizing that people enjoy sharing and being shared with, and I'm no longer afraid of imposing myself upon others. What I have to say has as much right to be said as what anyone else has to say. And even if it's perceived by some as wrong or foolish, that's OK. It's mine. It's as I am capable of seeing things. And I'm not afraid of how it will be accepted as long as I feel it's OK and right for me. And I no longer feel defensive if my ideas are rejected. And that is an amazing and very pleasant change.

I know I've other things to work out. All of these changes will be tested with reality events. But I'm so pleased with myself right now!

And that's the most exciting change of all.

MURIEL FRIEDMAN

Life Lab, I couldn't have done it without you. I was not anticipating going back to conventional school at my age. Life Lab opened so many doors, leading to exactly where I always wanted to be. I then attended Barry College for my M.S.W. I am a therapist and my goal is gaining more expertise in my field.

OPAL D. CASSIDY

Life Lab has given me self-confidence, helped me to find myself following a traumatic life experience, given me many new friends, challenged me to continue my education, opened up new doors to me, and helped me to find new goals in life.

I am adding more credits through Life Lab and waiting for acceptance in FIU's External Degree Program. My occupation is library clerk and program advisor at Life Lab.

that mankind has gone as far as it can go on its present tack. I agree wholeheartedly with the editors of *Change* that the more wholesome lifestyle we so badly need will not come about through "the heroics of a few," nor be directed "by some centralized bureaucracy" or "the enactments of governments."

During the next five years I want to participate in the "grass roots commitment for change" urged upon the American academic community by the *Change* editors. If that community does undertake "by example" to teach new habits and new propositions, to reshape a nation of citizens who can "live responsibly by the consequences of their actions," then I want to be part of that community.

During the next five years, my commitment is to work on my own, and with students, with staff, and with anyone else who is interested, to accomplish the following goals:

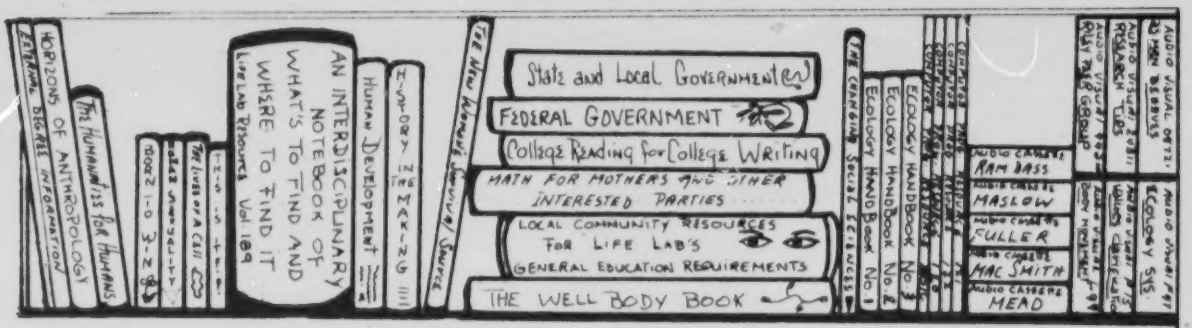
1. One goal is to pay off my "spiritual indebtedness," that is, to develop a life style in which I am able to really give as much as I take from the environment. I will try to build my own electric car and create *natural* systems for keeping it charged. By utilizing solar and other natural energy sources, I plan to drastically reduce my household dependence on electricity generated by fuels that are unrenewable or that pollute the environment. As a consumer, I will limit my purchases to products that are minimally "processed" and that use raw materials and energy in ways that do as little damage to the ecology as possible. I will know how to practise good stewardship with the "waste" products of my own household, and I will produce some of my food in my own yard. I will be well enough informed so that I can make judgments and urge action on public policies regarding environmental issues.

2. A second goal deals not with the external environment, but with the complex internal environments for which I am totally responsible. This is the *gut* world of my emotional and biological existence. I will try to be more in tune with the messages from this world. I will *take time* to be aware of the processes by which I function as an organism and by which I also transcend the purely organic functions of life. I will be equally attentive to the processes by which death, life's watchful companion, allows each function of my organism to slow and approach a time of rest. It is my intent to follow this drama attentively, with compassion and detachment, learning all I can until the end.

3. A third goal deals with my companions and our predicament. How do we help each other through the journey? How do we exercise the freedom and independence we yearn for, yet share equally the burden of making sure no one of us is left to suffer uncared for, to die unattended. I feel that the social consciousness of society has been enervated by red tape, legalities, regulations, and dehumanized communities. As sketched in my earlier "fantasies," I want to experiment in the coming years with more direct ways of showing responsibility for ourselves and for an extended family of colleagues or companions. I will help test forms of co-operative communities as systems for making a living, for serving others, and for eliminating the red-tape-tied, institutionalized middleman that now insures us, secures us, retires us, medicates us and buries us.

4. My last goal is to ask my children what were the lessons they learned from me. If I've not taught what I meant, I'll try again to communicate what I think is important - what wisdom, which insights and values, which special skills if lost in the transition from one generation to the next would leave all mankind poorer for the loss. What counts most is not whether or not they accept my ideas, but, rather, that I have communicated my ideas and my values clearly to them. This is the heritage I give them. It represents the farthest out point on my journey, the outpost marks on my life map, beyond which is a vast unexplored territory. My children may choose to retrace my steps and start over again, or choose some new direction I could never have imaged to explore. Yet, it is with my heritage they begin, my outpost marks are their starting points. The least I can do is mark them clearly.

67 our view


State and Local Government
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
College Reading for College Writing
MATH FOR MOTHERS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES
LOCAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LIFE LAB'S GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS
THE WELL BODY BOOK
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY NOTEBOOK OF WHAT'S TO FIND IT AND WHERE TO FIND IT
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
THE HUMANITIS FOR HUMANS
HORIZONS OF ANTHROPOLOGY
ECOLOGY HANDBOOK No. 1
ECOLOGY HANDBOOK No. 2
ECOLOGY HANDBOOK No. 3
AUDIO CASSETTE RAM DASS
AUDIO CASSETTE MASLOW
AUDIO CASSETTE FULLER
AUDIO CASSETTE MAC SMITH
AUDIO CASSETTE MEAD

METHODS AND RESULTS

NORMA WATKINS
AN IDEA ON INFORMATION GATHERING

An idea on information gathering: Lewis Thomas says in *The Lives of a Cell* that the gathering and exchange of information is what humans do, as bees build a hive. It is how we spend our lives. (An example of this phenomenon is this very book: in November, I heard Pam Johnson mention it on the escalator going up to Life Lab; I bought it the next week. Within two weeks almost everyone in Life Lab had read it. In December they were talking of it in Jackson, Mississippi, Washington, D.C., and New York. Without logical sequence, faster than a flu virus, we collect and exchange information.)

Life Lab is a hive of information. Resources are exchanged between student and advisor, advisor and student, advisor and advisor. Ideas and plans and seminars and books and tapes and films, an ocean of information washes out of the Downtown Campus and laps against the Broward County line and the Keys. I may sound heretical, for we got an enormous Federal grant to do it, but I think it is a mistake to try to freeze this information in a "resource" book. Even with the computer, it is too slow. The moment an advisor has filled out the computer form, new information is flowing out, being exchanged, supplanting the old. The computer and the resource book are handy places to record tapes, which must be asked for by number, or a certain number of recommended books (though I wonder if this doesn't prevent students from learning to look for their own); but for the rest of it, the articles and notebooks and places, I think this is what people are for -- in our bumbling inexplicable way we find, share and discard more than the computer can comprehend.

mac's view 68

EDUCATION SHOULD HELP ME:

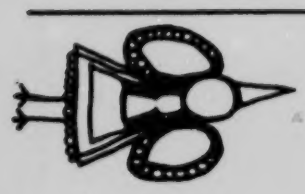
To be aware.
That is to be in touch with everything that affects me.
And how I affect other things.
To be more fully conscious.
To be willing to be more fully conscious.
To see through the labels we put on things -- like chemistry
and history and psychology and humanities or mother or father
or wife or husband or student or teacher or universe or the
labels I give to my feelings and the "things" I know.
Awareness, insight, understanding, wisdom...

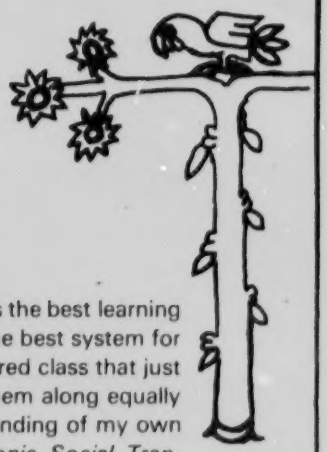
These are the educational goals I strive for in my role as --
a student, as a teacher, and as a human being.
I believe that if I pursue these,
"Knowledge" will come, but I will
not be subservient to it. I will not become
the slave to a ghost of facts that
anchor me into habits of thought that
make it possible for others to manipulate
me and, even worse, for me to manipulate
myself.

The stuff of education can be used to subtly
enslave or to free.
If my goal is more freedom to discover the
person I might be, then my need for learning will
never end.

Mac Smith (August 1974)

68 our view





SHARON HUFF

At last, after four terms in Life Lab, I am beginning to understand how it is the best learning system for me - at the moment (?) - and how I best learn. Actually, it seems the best system for everyone in a sense. Everyone is at a little different learning level and a structured class that just starts and ends at a predetermined place, can't pick up everyone and take them along equally on an educational tour. I am beginning to be more familiar with an understanding of my own particular learning style. I was beginning to perceive it, then EST (*Electronic Social Transformation*) opened my eyes much further. I'm primarily a multi-media instantaneous concept learner. COLOR. Shapes. Images... "a picture is worth a thousand words". Sound. Audio-Visual - a very stimulating and enjoyable learning experience - the most valuable for me, outside of people learning experiences.

Also, I see a structure to my book learning. I don't want to delve into any subject before I have a sketchy over-view of what it's about, 'cause I feel any in-depth information before I have a general knowledge can 1) bore, and 2) confuse me. Most regular text books take a small bit of information, explain it, and then try to weave it into the greater whole bit by bit. To me, this is backwards. I want to see the greater whole first, and then if it looks interesting, I am motivated to get more information on the "bits". As I already have a vague comprehension of how it all fits into the general scheme of the subject, the bits then become relevant. That's why *An Index of Possibilities/Energy & Power* is such an interesting book for me. I am given just enough information on each subject to give me a general understanding of it and a knowledge of whether or not I want to dig deeper. I love learning like that.

Life Lab is now really becoming meaningful to me. I see now how important it is for one to progress at his/her own rate. In many subjects I am at high school or pre-high school level. I would really like to know "where I was" during high school classes. I have absolutely no recollection. Writing notes to Lyndon in TV history. Hating Linda in civics. The rest a big blank. Only psychology and art were productive for me. With what was my mind occupied the rest of the time? Anyway, I learned nothing during those years, so it goes back to Junior High - I'm not even sure what I learned then. Many times I hear people talk about scientific truths, etc., that they take for granted everyone knows, but I don't know. I want to know where they learned it. With most of the books organized linear fashion, doling out the information bit by bit, so slowly you have lost your appetite, I haven't the patience to dig thru to find the information. Even a simple table of organization of the government - a chart I know I've seen somewhere in my past - is practically impossible to find - Miami Dade Downtown - Miami Dade North Campus - the research librarian finally threw up her hands in despair. If she has that much trouble, how can I expect to find it? It's a weary path, but rewarding when you find a relevant piece of information.

PART 14

NOTES TO MYSELF

Since beginning this book, I have been emptying a folder labeled "Notes to Myself." The notes were written at all hours, in all kinds of places. Whenever I thought of something I ought to include, I'd jot it down. I kept a notepad by my bed and I carried cards in my pockets. I also included quotes I thought expressed the philosophy of this book especially well.

As the book progressed I would leaf through the folder and throw away the notes for those ideas that had been included. I also threw away notes that didn't seem as important anymore. For awhile I was adding much more to my "Notes to Myself" folder than I was taking out. Both the book editors and I began to worry that my side of the book might never end.

But our worries and "my view" are coming to an end, after all.

When I finished *Part 13* about my goals for myself, I felt I had said whatever I had to say, for better or for worse. That made it a good time to quite.

My "Notes to Myself" folder was no longer bulging, but it was far from empty. I have just finished one last sorting process, throwing out some items and saving others for future possible books. The few that are left I feel a need to tack on here, like a kind of final *"P.S."*

The notes, all in my own unintelligible brand of shorthand, translate as follows:

- *"No Life Lab without Maude Cook's typing class."*
- *"Newspaper lessons unlock bureaucratic monolith."*
- *"A Zionist approach to administrative navigation."*
- *"Someone 'up there' helped Life Lab survive."*
- *"Show how Life Lab works today, and include sample documents."*

Now, I'll explain each note a little, then I'll use any additional space the editors give me to share a few of my favorite quotes from other sources.

"No Life Lab without Maude Cook's typing class" - I'd like to enter into the record my belief that the most valuable thing I learned in school was typing. That's the one skill, I believe, that was essential to me in creating Life Lab. All the necessary memos, documents and forms that laid the foundation could never have been processed through a secretarial pool. Besides, I edited as I typed, and the final drafts often didn't even resemble my first attempt.

So, thanks Mrs. Cook. Life Lab and I both owe you and your 10th grade typing class a debt of gratitude.

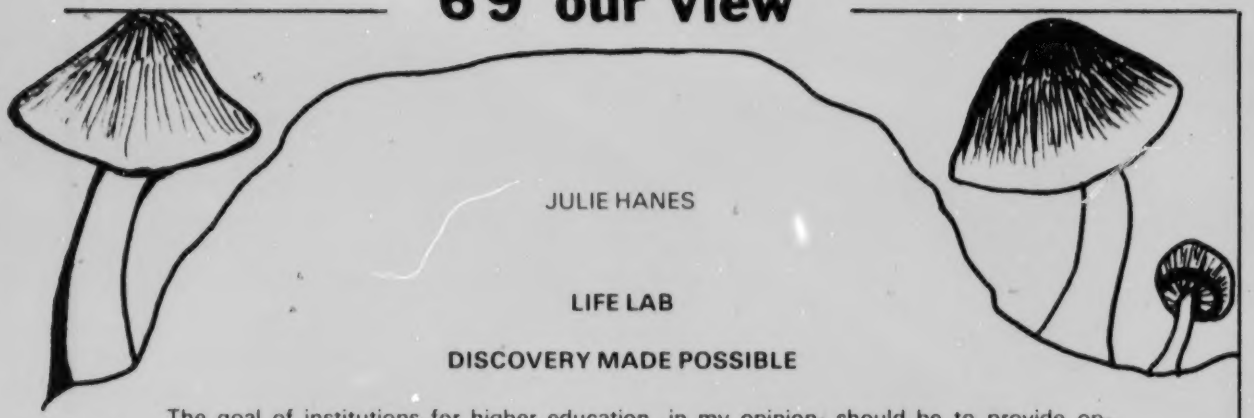
"Newspaper lessons unlock bureaucratic monolith" - My most valuable life-learning experience came while working for John McMullan, my first newspaper editor boss. I learned early that institutional regulations are never the "final word," and that institutions themselves are not monolithic. They are basically communications networks linking people.

As a reporter, I learned from John, to always look for people who feel secure. Secure people who *trust you* will allow you to test the limits of the institutional systems. They will encourage you to move and speak freely with minimum bureaucratic restrictions.

I believe the trust given me by secure people, plus my ability to type my own proposals, enabled Life Lab to successfully test the limits of Miami-Dade's tolerance for innovation.

"A 'Zionist' approach to administrative navigation" - I learned from an administrator named Carol Zion that the educational system is subject to seasonal fashions and fads. Through Carol, I came to appreciate the role of administrator as an artful navigator. She seemed to have an uncanny ability to sense each new head wind before it materialized. To administer Life Lab, I realized, I would have to develop a better "weather eye," and learn to reset our sails with each change in wind and tide. In education, as in all complex systems, there seems to be no such thing as a straight line between your starting point and your chosen destination. The inexorable forces

69 our view



JULIE HANES

LIFE LAB

DISCOVERY MADE POSSIBLE

The goal of institutions for higher education, in my opinion, should be to provide opportunities for students to discover new truths about themselves and their environment. Resource persons and materials should be made available to assist them in their research, and then the appropriate credentials and documented approval be given those students who indeed make their discoveries.

Over the years, the traditional classroom settings have provided entirely different opportunities. The student is presented bodies of old "truths" which he is told to "learn" (memorize) and if he can accomplish this satisfactorily, he is given documented approval by the institution and sent on his way with the delusion that *learning* has taken place.

I am so grateful that the Life Lab philosophy of learning has been granted the approval of institutions of higher learning and hope that the philosophy quickly is utilized in elementary and high schools before curiosity is extinguished.

In my own experience, I have found it very exciting to establish my own parameters of learning. In fact, if one does not think of establishing parameters, it is not necessary, and learning can go on to infinity. I find my mind is unfettered with memorization of items thought important by some teacher, and I can use this energy to explore other avenues of thought or begin to see a new perspective of an old idea.

In Life Lab, the student is immediately introduced to the need of tapping the creative resources of the mind to develop a study plan, a summary of what is hoped to be discovered (learned), and to select competencies they would like to acquire.

This presents difficulties which the student must overcome and in so doing----*discover.*

Selecting resources (instead of being told what to read or listen to) requires much research. This research brings discoveries. What titles interest me? What subjects intrigue me? Is a pattern emerging? A pattern that depicts *ME*? Hey, I didn't even know *ME*! DISCOVERY!

It has been an enriching experience to discover so much about myself I never knew.

To say there are no New Frontiers would be to deny that each of the billions of people on this earth do not possess, as I do, uncharted resources within themselves.

How exciting! HUMAN POTENTIAL. The most untapped resource on earth.

I did not set out to learn most of what I have learned so far in Life Lab. Just like Columbus whose "study plan" was to go to the East Indies, but by setting out differently than others before him, he ended up DISCOVERING . . . . . .

This is how I am learning!

I have learned what I did not even know I needed to learn; and those cognitive "facts" I set out to learn have faded into insignificance at this point . . . . . .

But there are other times . . . . . .

Meanwhile . . . . . .

I feel like a pioneer!

Life Lab . . . . . It's Working!!

of tide and time require considerable tacking and rethinking one's route in order to get anywhere worthwhile. It also makes the process more interesting and fun.

"Someone up there" helped Life Lab survive" - While Life Lab was still a small, unknown, "low totom" experiment, someone gave it a high priority for services in areas where we needed them most. In this trial-and-error developmental stage, I found we could get audio-visual and duplicating services in a fraction of the time usually required by *administrative regulations*. In retrospect, I think this was critical to our growth and survival.

From the short view, we were terribly inefficient. We'd invent new documentation forms and tape labs that we would sometimes discard even before we had a chance to use them. Then, we'd invent new ones. In the long run, I believe this process was every bit as efficient as it was chaotic. Options to rethink what we were doing and why were kept open to the very last minute. This was the ultimate as an *action research* model of education, which is what, it seems to me, Life Lab became.

So, to whoever "up there" allowed us the leeway to experiment, thanks!

"Show how Life Lab works today and include sample documents" - The book editors and I laughed at this *note to myself*. By the time you read this, how Life Lab works today will be different. So will some of the sample documents. This is the *process* we have been taking about. Life Lab is not a program that has *arrived* at its destination. It is still very much in the tacking and rethinking stage.

Let me give you two examples of what I mean before showing you sample documents. One cluster of staff is now revising our basic study contract. Undoubtedly, some new contract forms will be tried out soon. We also are working on a revised grading system. The most basic "satisfactory" contract performance probably will be rated as a "C" grade. Students will do additional individualized work to achieve "B" grades, and also will be allowed a limited number of "A" grade contracts as an additional option.

On the following pages, you will find samples of our old contract and a draft of the new one we will be experimenting with next term. Also included will be our most recent *"Life Lab Question & Answer Information Sheet,"* a few other basic documents and a few quotes I think relate to what we are trying to do in Life Lab.

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A LETTER FROM PAM PENOTTE IN CANADA

Hellow all you Labbers!

This is an attempt to share my experiences as a traveling student with you. This is #1 in a series of three monthly newsletters that I will be sending to you from Canada.

I am traveling with a small program called "The Learning Tribe." We are 15 people, 4 of which are staff members. The rest of The Learning Tribe is made up of people between the ages of 16 and 18. We will spend the fall term here in Canada, the winter term in Mexico, and the spring term in the states. There is a large variety of courses students may choose from. All students are required to participate in community studies class where we cover everything from food to politics about the area we are presently living in.

Here in Canada, we live in a very large house outside of Quebec City in a small, french speaking village called Pointe-au-Pic. We live together as a community and share the responsibilities. Monday through Thursday are class days. It's nice to have psychology class around the fire on cold days.

Everyone is beginning to settle in: Adam spent most of the day in the darkroom. Amy was off on her usual afternoon hike through the woods behind our house. Kate, Mary Ann, and Sally spent most of their spare time working on their first card weaving projects. Others studied or talked or just wandered around. Hannah told us a great tale in folklore and I incorporated Florida in my hairy story. French, U.S. and Natural History, Writing, Women in Literature, Drawing and Printmaking, outdoor Skills, Architecture, Great Books, and Photography are just some of the courses offered here.

I'm experiencing rough edges as I try to settle into a totally new environment. Summertime was nonstop play and Miami is a long way from Canada in more than physical respects. But I'm so happy to be here. I feel good about the academic aspects - it's a big challenge and I took it on being very aware that it would not be easy. Working is a little different just now and I can see light somewhere soon. I'm learning to cope with drastic changes in my environment and lots about group living. I'm much more than willing to answer any letters from you. I'd be happy to share Canada with anyone! Pam Penotte, c/o The Learning Tribe.

I will be attending the University of Miami in the Fall. I am now preparing for the fall, and...working at a China and Glass Shop as a sales manager. My life style is expanding into many diverse areas.

My current goal is to complete my remaining two years of college and to find inner peace with myself and with others.

My long term goal is to receive my degree in Education and to become a teacher for learning disabilities.

At Life Lab I found out a lot about myself and also about other people...I have learned a great deal about the educational systems of Life Lab and have become optimistic about teaching and educational institutions in and of the future. Students can benefit greatly from an instructor who cares about teaching students as human beings. I hope I can reach my students as Life Lab has reached me.

WENDY J. WILNER

LIFE LAB STUDY CONTRACT

SAMPLE OF OLD CONTRACT FORM

3015 (May '75)

NAME _____ STUDENT No _____

The student agrees to the following contract or a special contract must be negotiated with an Advisor and a Life Lab Coordinator.

(THE STUDENT SHOULD INITIAL EACH OF THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS)

1. Prepare a study plan, including competencies the student wants to achieve for each course. _____
2. Report each learning activity for credit on a Learning Experience Summary Log _____
3. Keep a Personal Journal _____
4. Keep an Interdisciplinary Textbook (Interest Journal) _____
5. Visit the bookstore and survey all the regular textbooks used for conventional course offerings _____
6. Evaluate two books or selected periodicals for each course, including two Life Lab required books for first erm students _____
7. Evaluate a minimum of 4 audio or video cassette tapes for each course _____
8. Utilize some off campus learning resources and -or participate as a volunteer with a community agency _____
9. Utilize some multi-media resources of your choice available at Miami Dade Audiovisual Departments and Study Centers on all three campuses. _____
10. Participate in a weekly Life Lab Peer Group Conference _____
11. Report and evaluate for each course approximately 64 hours of learning experiences each semester, not including the course reading requirement. "A" grade contracts should follow procedures outlined in the "Life Lab Program Description." _____
12. Either as part of the Peer Group Conference meetings, or in private conferences with the Advisor, students will complete an Interim Update report including a 5 minute tape summary of significant learning, and a Final Update, including a brief narrative transcript. _____
13. The student is contracting for the following courses and grades: (maximum: 16 credits in Fall or Winter; 13 in Spring-Summer)

    Course _____ Grade _____ ; Course _____ Grade _____

    Course _____ Grade _____ ; Course _____ Grade _____

    Course _____ Grade _____ ; Course _____ Grade _____
14. Student sign _____
15. Advisor sign _____
16. Date _____ Contract for _____ Term of 197 _____

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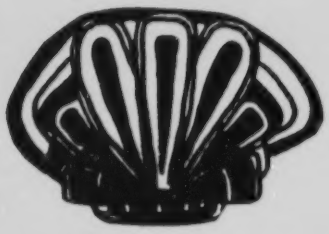

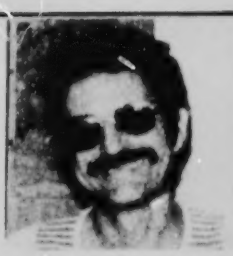

ALAN SKOLNICK

ONE MAN'S JOURNEY INTO LIFE LAB

Dear Nancy:

After much thought and extended consideration over a fifteen-second period, I would like to offer whatever aid and assistance I can furnish to the proposed Life Lab book. I saw Mac's thing you gave me which reads more like a schematic for a jet-propulsion engine than an outline for a book so I assume you have all of the technical stuff well in hand so the only contribution I believe I can make is to balance your scholarly, well-reasoned approach with my own brand of controlled hysteria.

From the student's point of view, and I haven't met a typical student yet at Life Lab, which is to me the endearing quality of Life Lab, that it does not produce stereotypes or encourage their manufacture, I find myself going through changes which are extremely encouraging. My original attitude of self-defeating, mock-humility has been replaced by a new attitude of overbearing self-confidence which is much more useful to me now that I have determined that my future lies in the writing field. It eliminates all of the time consuming bull involved in the question "Why write?" and reduces the problem so "What great thing will I write now?" I mean, why not?

There was no one more surprised than me when Mac asked me to jot down a few notes about the Life Lab experience from my own personal point of view as a representative of the student point of view. What surprised me most was that he hadn't asked me much sooner as I am very opinionated and not ideally suited to working under tense deadline pressure.

But Mac is very persuasive and I am easily flattered which accounts for the fact that I am burning the midnight oil, analyzing my feelings about my association with Life Lab. I don't want to get into any fights with purists who think I should just be recording my feelings and not analyzing them to death and sucking the juice out of them. I happen to just be an analyzer, a born second-guesser, and it would be more unfaithful of me to shout out feelings like bolts of spaghetti than for me to sit back and puff a little and try to control the flow just a bit so it doesn't come out all breathless enthusiasm without a period or a comma to prove there's some order to the thing.

That's about the extent of my restrictions, that slender thread of control, because I think Life Lab involves more of the senses than just those cognitive, intellectual faculties of the trained test-taker. Which believe me, I appreciate, because I think education should seep into the pores through all available openings and my own education before Life Lab was a sorry one indeed, at least in terms of allowing me to feel like part of the process. I always came out spindled and mutilated.

But this is not a fan letter to Life Lab either because if I were running it, I'd probably be jumping around like some anarchist radical, throwing monkeywrenches into the spokes of anything that moved. But that's great because that's involvement and caring and much better than the detached cynicism that used to be my lifestyle.

SAMPLE OF EXPERIMENTAL NEW CONTRACT FORM

LIFE LAB STUDY CONTRACT

NAME _____ TERM _____

STUDENT NO. _____ ADVISOR _____

I am contracting for the following courses and grades:

Course _____ Grade _____

Course _____ Grade _____

Course _____ Grade _____

Course _____ Grade _____

Course _____ Grade _____

I understand that there is a minimum of 64 hours per course per term to be documented on Life Lab Log Sheets.

I am in agreement with my Advisor on work standards for each grade level.

DATE: _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE _____

ADVISOR SIGNATURE _____

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ALAN SKOLNICK

PRESENT TENSE
A Story By Alan Skolnick

We sit in a circle because somebody decided that information is more easily transmitted that way. I have no objection, no real objection, though the old way seemed to work pretty well. Sitting next to me is Evans, who is also a veteran. In fact, looking around we are all of us veterans except Samuels who is the facilitator, which is the new word for teacher. I am relaxed, though hardly eager. Samuels is a well-meaning fellow, earnest, intense, but slightly cowed by our lack of reaction to statements he has carefully prepared as stimulating openers.

"We are all controlled," says Samuels,

Nobody says anything. Evans continues to search his pockets for a match and I make myself more comfortable on the beanbag. The others do not move even this much. As the silence lengthens I feel an inner glee. Normally, somebody will say something, or at least grunt. Today, for some reason, we are all lost in our own thoughts, and no one is up to the responsibility of a dialogue with Samuels.

"How are we controlled?" asks Samuels. He looks at me.

This is a new approach for Samuels. Usually, he does not look at us directly. We are all older than he is, wear our hair shorter, and do not come to the building in blue jeans. None of this matters, at least to me, but I do not know what goes on in Samuel's head.

"I don't think we're controlled, Paul," I say. "I think we have free will."

He looks at me gratefully. I don't know if it is because I have called him "Paul" or I have given him an opening to continue what he calls "thoughtful dialogues." Evans is scratching himself. We are all men in this room so he does it openly and at length.

"From the minute we are born to the moment we die, we are controlled," says Samuels. "Let me give you a for-instance." I know before he says it that Samuels will bring up the pledge of allegiance. I do not know anybody who is more concerned about the pledge of allegiance than Samuels. In a way, it is a pity because there are several points Samuels could make that I would have trouble dealing with, but I have not thought about the pledge of allegiance for twenty five years and Samuels would not want me to help him. He feels learning is accomplished through confrontation so I am obligated to disagree with him.

"Why is it necessary to have a pledge of allegiance in a free country?"

It is not really a question because Samuels is already supplying the answer.

"It isn't necessary. In fact, it is a contradiction in terms but that doesn't bother me so much. When 'they' put in 'under God' that bothered me. How was it decided that God had entered the action on our side? Why didn't God play favorites until then? In my opinion, nobody asked God. It was decided by a bunch of politicians that, given a choice, God had no alternative but to go American."

Evans is still scratching his balls but I notice now that Potter, who is religious and brings his Bible to school, is getting stirred up.

"I don't think we can accomplish anything by discussing God in this class."

Potter says everything very mildly. It is necessary to strain to hear him but Potter is also the most decorated man in this room. Potter, unlike Samuels, looks everybody in the eye. I agree with Potter but not on religious grounds.

Unlike the rest of us, when Samuels gets nervous, it is very evident. He twitches. The rest of us have learned to control our emotions or, at least, to cloak them.

PAGE 2 - SAMPLE EXPERIMENTAL CONTRACT FORM

LIFE LAB STUDY PLAN

I. Goals - Academic, vocational, personal

A. Long range goals (Use Curriculum Outline form in this packet for help with academic planning.)
B. Short range goals.

II. Course

A. Course title, number and description from MDCC catalog.
B. Motivation. (Why did you take this course?) Curiosity, interest, need, requirement, fits in with goals - explain.
C. Discuss ways in which this course is interdisciplinary with other courses you are taking this term.
D. What is the broad scope of the subject matter of this course? (Look at the textbooks for this course in the bookstore, research in the library, etc.)

III. Competencies

A. List the competency or competencies you would choose to develop out of the material discussed above.
B. Ways and Means. What resources will you use to achieve your competency goals? (See Suggested Learning Activities in this packet.)
C. Processing. How will you process the learning taking place within each "ways and means" you utilize? (See Suggested Learning Activities part II.)
D. Verification. How will you demonstrate the competion of your competencies?

IV. The completed Study Plan for each course (subject to revision) should be signed by you and your Advisor.

ALAN SKOLNICK

But Samuels gives the game away. It is uncomfortable to watch Samuels twitch. I have just eaten and I do not want the comfortable feeling to go away.

"In this country, in order to get the citizens to kill, it is first necessary to dehumanize the enemy. Instead of people, we have to make them gooks, chinks, slopes, nips, slants. If they're not quite human it's OK to bomb the shit out of them."

This is a nice point for Samuels but then I don't suppose he has met any gooks. And, besides that, in his excitement, he has forgotten about Potter. Potter doesn't like the word "shit." Normally, Samuels would remember that but there is a strange feeling in the room. All of us are looking at Potter. Even Evans has forgotten to scratch his balls. But it is OK. Potter stands up and very slowly begins to gather his books, gazing mildly at Samuels like some interesting new species of insect. He leaves the room.

Damn, I hate to watch Samuels twitch. I wouldn't be in this room if I didn't need the VA money, but as long as I have to be here, I'd prefer anything to watching Samuels twitch. It starts with his hands and then there's a facial tic and soon he has to have a cigarette. Watching him trying to light a cigarette is no fun either.

"I appologize to Mr. Potter. I was trying to make a point and I got carried away, gentlemen. I could have expressed it so that it wasn't necessary for Mr. Potter to leave."

I am trying very hard to remember Samuels' first name. It seems very important to call him by his first name. I know I have used it a few minutes ago but it completely escapes me.

Evans is talking. I have never heard Tom Evans talk in this class. "Ya know, Paul, Potter kind've makes me nervous too. I've told him that," drawls Evans.

I'll be damned. Will miracles never cease. There is nothing in this world that makes Evans nervous. I have been with him in situations that froze my blood and all he ever told me was, "I don't believe in anything." Yet it is Evans and not me who is responsible for the fact that Samuels is making a dramatic recovery. His twitching ceases and he is about to thank Evans but Evans is scratching his balls again. I have to respect Samuels. I think he smiled a little bit just then. So I will say something in this class.

"I don't know. It's an instinct with me. I see the poor and no one helps them. And not me either, though I talk about it. I see the blacks and wonder why none of my best friends are black. I watch wars on TV and I still finish my dinner. I want to communicate with Mr. Potter and explain to him that I'm as human as he is but we don't speak the same language. I don't want to hurt anybody or anything. Yet for all that moral superiority that I sometimes carry around, I sit in a room with you guys and I feel like a child, as though you know something I couldn't possibly know without being there."

It is Conover who answers Samuels, Conover who sleeps with a gun beneath his pillow. Conover is the oldest of us and the only unmarried man in the room. "You just haven't learned to kill anybody, Mr. Samuels. You didn't miss that much."

Later, when Evans and I are getting drunk, he will tell me "I kinda like the little bastard" and Evans has never said he liked me.

PAGE 3 - SAMPLE EXPERIMENTAL CONTRACT FORM

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

I. Ways of Exploring Resources

A. books
B. newspapers
C. periodicals or magazines
D. libraries
E. book stores
F. audio-visual resources
G. community resources
H. field trips
I. people with expertise
J. work experiences
K. experiential learning
L. affective learning
M. observation of yourself
N. observation of others
O. library tape tours
P. textbook survey at bookstore
Q. weekly peer group
R. weekly seminar
S. auditing regular classes
T. surveying Life Lab forms and reprints
U. Other

II. Ways of Processing Learning From Resources

A. journal
B. time log
C. meditation
D. discussion
E. book evaluations
F. audio-visual evaluations
G. imaginative writing
H. expository writing (theme or research paper)
I. seminar presentations
J. sharing with peer group.
K. creating new resources
L. reflection and analysis
M. art forms, music, dance
N. learning exercises
O. conduct demonstrations of learning achieved by resources listed above
P. projects
Q. links
R. Other

III. Ways of Sharing Learning

A. sharing with advisor
B. sharing with peer group
C. sharing with family and friends
D. helping with a seminar
E. sharing projects
F. "each one teach one"
G. initiating your own group/mini Life Lab
H. giving a seminar
I. volunteering in community
J. interning with Life Lab
K. entering a new resource in Life Lab's "Encyclpedia of Learning Resources" or "Activities" Workbook
L. Links
M. Other

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PROCESSING PRESENT TENSE

ALAN SKOLNICK

The **Present Tense** evolved from a discussion in the**Emerging Man and Woman Seminar**. It centered around the word **control** and the question of whether we, in a free society, are being controlled, or, to put it more accurately, whether we, while under the illusion of being free, are actually controlling ourselves in such a way as to act against our own best interests. The premise of **Present Tense** is that we are.

The problem of how to put this into story form has as many solutions as there are storytellers. My impression of the art of writing stories is that one of the **don'ts** is not to **preach**. To avoid preaching, I felt it was necessary to write the story from a point of view other than the teacher, Samuels, where my true sympathies lie.

The narrator of this story is nameless but the qualities I hoped to inject him with are these: First - he should be an analytical observer rather than a lively participant in the story. To accomplish this he had to be in the classroom for reasons other than an active interest in the subject matter. To solve that, I made him a combat veteran, presumably of the late, lamented Vietnam War, sitting in this classroom in order to collect the money he is entitled to under the G.I. Bill.

The major assumption I had to make, which has not been validated by my own experience, is that killing is a dehumanizing activity and that the killer destroys part of himself when killing another, regardless of the sanctions. I am a veteran but I have never killed anybody. By pure chance, they didn't hold a war during my term of enlistment. Had there been a war, I am sure I would have done my part, as much in fear of the possible consequences of cowardice as any real belief in the rightness of the conflict. Such was my state of mind at the age of nineteen when I enlisted in the Army. So I allowed myself the author's liberty of assuming that we are all enough alike for me to put myself in that situation and imagine the possible effects. By peopling the entire classroom with combat veterans, I attempted to create an atmosphere in which an entire group of desensitized people were natural antagonists for a teacher with humanistic beliefs but no experience.

In the best writing class I have ever taken, that held by John Keasler of the **Miami News**, John stressed the idea that the dialogue and action have to tell the story, not the words of an obstrusive, omniscient narrator who explains the significance of what is taking place. The character, Evans, survives by believing in nothing. Potter has retreated into Bible study and refuses to listen to dissenting opinion. Conover, the least developed character, was, in my mind's eye, the most complex. I imagined the cause of his bachelorhood to be that he was afraid of killing the woman he married because of the nightmares that followed his war experience. Then narrator possesses a quality I have been accused of having; that of seeming to be a watcher, an observer of television drama rather than a living participant in the life experience. The narrator is inwardly excited at the prospect of confrontation but uneasy about committing himself. These are the characters, in their various stages of withdrawal, and their natural foil is the teacher who can afford to be idealistic because he "hasn't been there." I believe that, in real life, few dramatic changes occur in the psyche because of classroom dialogue. But I am also an addict of the "happy ending," so there was for me a necessity to at least imply that the characters had undergone a slight alteration in their fixed mode of thinking.

LIFE LAB QUESTIONS & ANSWER INFORMATION SHEET

What is Life Lab?

Life Lab is an interdisciplinary academic division at Miami-Dade Community College, Downtown Campus. Students in Life Lab can contract to do individualized studies rather than take traditional, teacher-directed classroom courses. It is similar to the University Without Walls (UWW) program sponsored by the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities.

What is meant by individualized studies?

In individualized studies, students plan a series of learning activities that particularly fit their interests and time schedule. While traditional classes can be included in the plan, the activities typically include use of audio and video cassettes, reading, field trips, TV documentaries and films, seminars, workshops, and special service projects such as volunteer work. Students spend about the same amount of time on their studies as they would if they were attending classes. However, in a classroom, the time of attendance and the content to be studied in each course is usually structured in advance by the teacher. In Life Lab, we suggest a variety of resources and concepts, but the students are responsible for structuring their own study programs.

What is meant by interdisciplinary?

This means that the cluster of courses in a student's study contract is considered as a whole, rather than as separate subjects. The interdisciplinary aspect focuses on the relationship between what students are studying and their own real life goals, rather than on classifying information into different subject categories. Therefore, most reading, tapes, projects, and seminars relate in one way or another to several courses in a study contract.

How many credits can a student take in Life Lab?

Life Lab students can register for a minimum of 6 credits and a maximum of 16 credits for a full length semester. This maximum includes Life Lab courses and any other courses taken for credit. There are more than 40 different "courses" available through Life Lab, including enough general education courses to earn an Associate in Arts Degree.

How do students get credit for their Life Lab courses?

The student's contract outlines a series of required learning experiences - a study plan for the semester, developed by the student around his or her particular goals. Students must document their learning experiences in several ways. They keep written Journals in which they report and evaluate every learning activity to be counted toward the completion of their study contract. They also meet weekly for three hours with a Peer Group including other students and a staff member. An important purpose of the Peer Group is to discuss and document the many learning experiences students will be including in their study plans. Students review the significance of their learning in a midterm and final contract conference. They also make a brief audio tape summarizing their learning.

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ALAN SKOLNICK

I am the worst judge of whether the story succeeds in actualizing the intention of the premise. It suffers the liability of being confined to a fixed setting with a minimum of action. It pits opposing stereotypes against each other, a hippie-hardhat interaction with no mediating force, no middle of the road, so-called normal individual. The teacher is plagued by guilt, cherishing his ideals, yet wavering between the idea that he is unfit to lecture because of his unworthiness to be in this company and alternately glad that he has been spared this ordeal.

Still, the story had to be written this way because this is the way it came out. I am not constituted to be a rewrite man, committed to second and third drafts and the search for the perfect word. So no amount of afterthought will save this story from being what it is. While it is being written, it has a life of its own and when it is finished my interest in it dies with it. But for whatever help it may be to understand where I am coming from, this premise is included to explain why I wrote it.

Where and When do Peer Groups meet?

While Life Lab is an organizational unit of Downtown Campus, students and staff meet all over Dade County. Many meet at the Downtown Campus and in the vicinity of North and South Campuses. They also meet in other public facilities such as Community Schools, churches, synagogues, and community centers. Some Peer Groups meet in private homes. The groups meet for approximately three hours at the time and day that best suits group members - morning, afternoon, evening, weekdays, and weekends.

What kind of students do best in LIfe Lab?

To succeed in Life Lab, students must be self-directed and motivated. Many students need the structure of the classroom and the discipline of an instructor setting deadlines for each assignment. In Life Lab, students are largely responsible for setting their own pace and organizing their own material in ways that will be meaningful for them. For one student this responsibility can lead to valuable creative learning experiences. For another student, it can lead to disappointment, frustration, and very little learning accomplished. In general, somewhat older students, who have shouldered responsibilities for a job and/or a family seem to do best in Life Lab. However, some very young students, eager to direct their own learning, also have done well. The nature of the program and the courses it offers make it best suited for students interested in the behavioral sciences and the helping professions (teaching, social work, psychology, community organization, government service jobs, and health services.) It can also provide a good foundation for Liberal Arts majors and for students primarily interested in the development of their own human potential.

Can students get credit for "life experience?"

Life Lab does not give credit for past life experience. Students can get credit for current "life experience" learning while they are enrolled in Life Lab if these experiences are documented and evaluated as part of a study contract. For instance, Life Lab students have received credit for conducting workshops at drug rehabilitation centers and at jails, for personal therapy sessions, for community organization work with migrants, for attending National Training Laboratory workshops, for study periods at growth centers and ashrams, for inservice training in community health centers and day care centers, and even for self-study analysis related to personal crisis experiences such as divorce, a death, or a serious illness.

How can I enroll in Life Lab?

The first step is to call 577-6768 to get additional information, or to drop by the Life Lab Center, Room 1640, Downtown Campus, 300 N.E. 2nd Ave. between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Before applying for admission in Life Lab all prospective students are required to attend an Orientation Circle Meeting to discuss the program with a staff member. It is important that students understand their responsibilities in Life Lab, as well as their opportunities. These orientation sessions are held one morning and one evening each week at Downtown Campus, as well as in other locations. Call 577-6768 for the schedule.

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NORMA NEWMAN

SOUNDS OF HALLOWED GROUNDS

Have you ever heard a sound that reminded you of another time or place? Sounds, like tastes and smells, are stored in our memory banks, and when heard again they conjure up a vision of a previous experience. I have a sound that is stored away that is so unique I feel strange each time I hear it. I first recall hearing it in a movie, and it added suspense and drama to the story.

Jeremiah Johnson was a mountain man who chose to live in the wilderness rather than the wilds of civilization. Suspense and drama came to his story when he had to cross an Indian burial ground. This was their most sacred place, and anyone who would violate it could expect swift and terrifying revenge. The Indians built platforms for their dead and decorated them with ornate objects to ward off evil spirits. The platforms were high off the ground to protect the bodies from wild animals and to insure the souls a safe trip to the Happy Hunting Ground.

A cautious and apprehensive Jeremiah quietly rode his horse through the burial ground. It was the dead of winter, and softly falling snow added to the awesome sight of the death platforms. However, it was the sound, an almost inaudible whistling, not unlike the wind blowing through pine trees, that gave the whole scene its impact.

I live in South Florida, and it has been a long time since I last saw snow. I never rode a horse. But I heard that sound again, last night, as I drove down a newly paved road, a road that runs parallel to the ocean, that once was narrow and so undeveloped that I could see the ocean from my car. Now the road has six lanes, and the huge complexes of buildings on either side gave me the feeling that I was riding through a canyon. These edifices with all their ornamentation and bright lights seemed somehow lifeless. The streets and driveways were strangely deserted. It was very quiet, but there was this sound.

I realized it was my tires on the new pavement that made a strange whistling, the sound that triggered the weird memory. These buildings that house the old suddenly took on a strange appearance. They started to resemble platforms, platforms piled one on top of another, higher and higher, as though they were meant to protect the inhabitants from wild beasts and intrusions. For some reason, I could not help but think I too was traveling on the hallowed ground of a burial place.

SOME FAVORITE QUOTES TO SHARE

PABLO CASALS

Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that never was before and will never be again. And what do we teach our children in school? We teach them that two and two makes four and that Paris is the capital of France. When will we also teach them what they are? We should say to each of them: Do you know what you are? You are a marvel. You are unique....In the millions of years that have passed, there has never been another child like you. And look at your body - what a wonder it is! Your legs, your arms, your cunning fingers, the way you move! Yes, you are a marvel. And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel? You must cherish one another. You must work - we must all work to make this world safe for its children.

J. KRISHNAMURTI

I wonder if we have ever asked ourselves what education means. Why do we go to school, why do we learn various subjects, why do we pass examinations and compete with each other for better grades? What does this so-called education mean, and what is it all about? This is really a very important question, not only for the students, but also for the parents, for the teachers, and for everyone who loves this earth. Why do we go through the struggle to be educated? Is it merely in order to pass some examinations and get a job? Or is it the function of education to prepare us while we are young to understand the whole process of life? Having a job and earning one's livelihood is necessary - but is that all? Are we being educated only for that? Surely, life is not merely a job, an occupation; life is something extraordinarily wide and profound, it is a great mystery, a vast realm in which we function as human beings. If we merely prepare ourselves to earn a livehood, we miss the whole point of life; and to understand life is much more important than merely to prepare for examinations and become very proficient in mathematics, physics, or what you will.

CARL JUNG

Problems are never solved by legislation or by tricks. They are only solved by a general change of attitude. And the change does not begin with propaganda and mass meetings or with violence. It begins with a change in individuals. It will continue as a transformation of their personal likes and dislikes, of their outlook on life and of their values, and only the accumulation of such individual changes will produce a collective solution.

MICHAEL ROSSMAN

Our bumbling casual group is one of many now trying to model different ways of learning and sharing power. As a learning collective, we have learned how to move democratically on a frontier, together enough for support, loosely bound enough for each to pursue his or her ideosyncratic exploration. To this home base we bring back the fragments of learning that we discover or buy on the expensive market. With no leader, but each teaching when ready, we share them, take them apart, puzzle them into new combinations.

ROBERT H. MC CABE

...a review of societal change, economics, and advances in knowledge of the learning process resulted in increased emphasis on the development of management systems.

Nothing can be more frustrating than for faculty to develop a well-conceived and economically feasible plan for learning, only to find that the management systems are not designed to accomodate it.... Unusual learning arrangements are generally administered as exceptions to systems designed only for the traditional. Substantive change in organization for learning requires more broadly conceived management systems.

David Meadows

I look. Sometimes I do not see. I listen, But sometimes I do not hear. I talk - when I have little to say. I touch and do not always feel.

There are some who can hear love in the tone of a voice. Some who can look at a person and know them. There are some who can touch a tear and feel the pain. There some who look up to the world and down on no one.

They laugh when something is funny... Cry when they are hurt... and choose their friends because there is caring, and not particularly because of color, sex or religion.

How long can we let these people stay as they are?

Oh Lord - Save our children!!

It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is hidden to the eye.

Antoine De Saint Exupery
The Little Prince

JOHN LACHS

(addressing entering students at Vanderbilt University)

For all that our education does for us, we can all end as emotional cripples. We suppose that the important thing in college is to act like a walking compendium of quotes, to come up, like the well programmed computer, with the correct response to any stimulus. Is it any wonder then that students who graduate with more easy knowledge than Newton or Leonardo ever thought possible, nevertheless can not make an intelligent choice about their future? The university boldly rejects even the suggestion that it teach values, that it prepare its students to encounter themselves, that it stress the improvement of our daily lives....

This abnegation of the responsibility to *educate* us, as distinct from cramming us full of facts, is at least a part cause of the generation of lawyers involved in Watergate, the polluters and the profiteers, the inhumane efficiency experts and the cold war engineers.....

I invite you to think of this (Honor) System as an instrument of freedom at Vanderbilt. If you see its point and permit it to structure your lives, you may want to go beyond it and demand that even our curriculum reflect new opportunities for the education of our desires, for the understanding of our needs and for the growth of our personalities. Honor is but one facet of virtue; there are so many ways in which our character could grow. You might one day come to demand that the lives of your professors become a full and adequate expression of what they teach. You may learn to evaluate our administrators not only by what they say and what they do in their official capacity, but also by what manner of human beings they are.

CARL ROGERS

I don't make choices; I grope forward and this direction feels good and this one doesn't so I move in another direction. It's only looking back afterward that I say, "Oh well, I chose to move in that direction." Actually, in fact, it was my total system that somehow took into account all the complex factors. It is a flowing process. I never have had any luck with making specific choices.

DAVID MORRIS & KARL HESS

It is our further contention that leaders are becoming obsolete, that large-scale units of both the economy and politics are actually social dinosaurs, lumbering toward a time when the urgent demands of practical nature will make them extinct and obsolete. Mineral resources will simply not support the waste and concentrations of power which are the natural food of great leadership. Rising aspirations of people generally to be more than pawns in great power plans certainly challenge the ideas of great and concentrated power...

The source of the alternatives which could replace the old orders of power, we will, will be in the neighborhoods - not only of this nation, but of all nations - when people face real necessities for alternative action and then see, in their neighborhoods, the space to take those actions.

PAUL GOODMAN

The belief that a highly industrialized society requires twelve to twenty years of prior processing of the young is an illusion or a hoax. The evidence is strong that there is no correlation between school performance and life achievement in any of the professions, whether medicine, law, engineering, journalism, or business.... Doing others' lessons under compulsion for twenty years does not tend to produce professionals who are autonomous, principled, and ethically responsible to client and community...Now, paradoxically, when so many are going to school, the training of authentic learned professionals is proving a failure, with dire effects on our ecology, urbanism, polity, communications, and even the direction of science....

By and large, it is not in the adolescent years but in later years that, in all walks of life, there is need for academic withdrawal, periods of study and reflection, synoptic review of the texts. The Greeks understood this and regarded most of our present college curricula as appropriate for only those over the age of thirty or thirty-five.

AGAIN

by Edith Baxter

Descending snowflakes
Blanketing graves
Of autumn rainbows
The Earth rests
Quiescent in freeze
Revitalizing with thaw
Nourished by cool waters
Gestating - quickening
Infant Spring
Budding to solar rays
Blossoming to exaltation
Experiencing new life
Swaying - propagating
To warm breeze of summer
Thirsty with drought
Tiring, maturing, aging
Beautiful proud fall
Falling, dying, fallen
A wreath of rainbows
A fresh snow
Again

SO . . . ?

by Barbara Ann

... years have passed, too big to see,
while i
distracted but resembling the living,
have pivoted, roboted
with bravado into the almighty N E W .
along with millions of others
with honorable thoughts of
unexplored motion.

i took a walk-in-space last night
for a talk with feminism.
my acid brain relived its initiation
into the freeze of the feminist cause,
with its necessary breakdown of the family structure.
revelation: a large scale conspiracy exposed!
shocking open my innocent eyes - victim!
SO! Life has been playing subtle tricks on us!
our closest friend has become the enemy
and an army is formed.
do we still celebrate the birth of a child?

HORIZON -

by Frank Stokes

On the steps with a sigh
Of relief, the magnified
Possession turned to
Face the paths of
Destiny, with a
Man screaming
Author!

In the race for the great
Red queen's chalice, the
Man felt his hands
On the separate
Reality, but
Why
Bother?

Through the dance of a
Lonely gypsy, he saw that
There is a staircase
Leading to and from
The definite
Journey. Not
Another!

Around the climax of his
Temple the purple haze
Lifted, and the
Wingless predator
Rested and said!
'No further'

I AM TIMELESS

by Edith Baxter

I am a reflection
I am timeless
Imaged in visual truth
My life was set in motion
By concentric waves
Brushed in washes of color
I was bathed in fine
Oils of linseed
And perfumed with spirits
I lend atmosphere
To those in my presence
I am a portrait, a flower
A farm, a bird, an ocean
I am the world for the world to see
I am a painting

PATRICIA CROSS

.....students are usually urged to meet minimal standards of academic achievement. They can, and frequently do, consider their education completed upon meeting the basic requirements for the degree. But when students are educated to the pursuit of excellence, they find that education does not end with the degree. When personal achievement and development are internalized as goals, the motivation for learning is lifelong.

KIYO MORIMOTO

Several times over the years I have been confronted, almost accused, by people whom I have endeavored to help. They have gained the perspective to be able to talk about their own concerns differently - which means they have expanded their capacity to perceive things from several different positions. This complicates the process of decision-making, and they become furious at me for robbing them in some way of the limited view of reality that has provided them with a kind of stability. I become ambivalent because I wonder if learning is worthy of that much anguish. Am I doing them a service by providing a context that has increased their pain, especially through the discovery of their own limits? Generally I feel that at least any decision they make or action they take will be from a basis of being better informed and that they are in motion and engaged in learning. Ultimately the choice is theirs to make.

L.P. JACKS

What then is the vocation of the whole man? So far as I can make out, his vocation is to be a creator; and if you ask me what motive can be appealed to, what driving power can be relied on, to bring out the creative element in men and women, there is only one answer I can give; but I give it without hesitation - the love of beauty, innate in everybody, but suppressed, smothered, thwarted in most of us.....

DENNIS L. MEADOWS AND LEWIS PERELMAN

In simple terms, learning always requires the process of experimentation, of trial-and-error. It is clear where the antithesis between schooling and learning lies; learning requires trials and errors, but schooling frustrates trials and punishes errors. This is not to say that learning does not take place within the system of schooling; but the learning which does occur is largely incidental and those who do learn are merely monitored, graded, and classified by the system, and then at the end of the schooling process are channeled into various social and economic strata, according to the amount of information they have processed. The schooling system does very little to cultivate learning and a great deal to stifle it by its overwhelming insistance on information-processing as the fundamental model of system performance.

JOE FALK

One point we want to emphasize related to the leaders is that they should be "educators" as well as "leaders." Their main responsibility is to stimulate cooperation among the members and between the association and other community resources. They are to be catalysts in this voluntary process, not administrators of an organization.

Planning for the future must be directed more to creating potential options than to predicting certain events... A definition of planning which points to the creation and maintenance of options implies a far more complex type of planning.

ROBERT H. MC CABE

Education stands at the brink of significant change in instructional practice. Technological advances in communications media and data handling equipment have introduced the capacity for dramatically expanded diversity in approaches to instruction. Education is just beginning to learn how to apply these technological advances....

All of this forcasts a much more intricated educational system with the accompanying requirement for far more sophistication in planning. The Academic Accounting system is intended to aid in the instructional planning process.

PROCESS by J. HOLSHOUSER

I am in the process of being born.
Into what?
Out of what?
So much is here
Sometimes drifting
Sometimes surging
Urgent, yet languorous.
Feeling so alive
So much joy
So much pain
Hope
Fear
Exhilaration.
A gathering of forces
A coming-forth newly united
Constituted of the old, the past,
Yet, a wholly new entity.
Unique
Static
Yet constantly, infinitely, changing.
Being and becoming.
Complete, completed, and completing.
Seeking out each micro-second of life
That point of tension
Which is coherence
And celebration.

NORMA NEWMAN -- NEW CLAY

My Mother thought this child was like a piece of clay,
Hers to form and model in her special, chosen way.
Mother what has happened to the clay that should be me,
Why was it like a prison, from which I struggled to be free?

My Mother wanted me to be the sunshine of her life,
And she tried so hard to shape me with her trusty sculptor's knife,
And yet there was one shadow her artist's eye could never see,
It was that I was helping form the me I'd come to be.

My Mother said she loved me and had done the best she could,
And I truly love my Mother, not just because I should,
She only tried to protect me with a nice protective wall,
She had no way of knowing I'd let it grow so tall.

My Mother said, "Keep busy, it makes life more interesting."
I hadn't given up on life, so I tried most everything,
I tried a thing called Life Lab when I was feeling low,
Now the walls are crumbling around me as they did at Jericho.

My Mother thought a child was like a piece of clay,
And now I am a child new- discovering everyday.

A NEW ANTIQUE

A late start for a new beginning
A rebirth of happiness
Focusing on future goals
An ageless blush of survival
A clean breath of rainbows
A young man in undatable clothes
An aged woman in undatable mask
A priceless antique glued anew
Yesterday a crises - Today a new life.

by Edith Baxter

DOUGLAS H. HEALTH

An education that does not work itself into a man's values, challenge his view of himself, and alter his relations with others is unlikely to produce many maturing effects that persist....

For many, the more important kinds of skills they needed were to make judgements with very incomplete information available, to sensitively size up an interpersonal situation and react appropriately, to incorporate their feelings into their judgements. One alumnus said, "I've come to learn that you can't solve things intellectually....you've got to be guided by what you feel...you have to trust your instincts a little more." Their overintellectualized higher education trained them to distrust their feelings. It inhibited learning that most of the important decisions they were to make in their adult lives were ones of judgement, not of analytic logic...

Haverford continued to affect the lives of many of its alumni because it provided an ethos that demanded its students become more mature in their character, not just in their intellect....

RICHARD JEFFERIES

The hours when we are absorbed by beauty are the only hours when we really live...They are the only hours that absorb the soul and fill it with beauty. This is real life, and all else is illusion, or more endurance.

ROBERT GREENLEAF

Not only do we live in the age of the anti-leader, we are burdened with an anti-innovative attitude as well. There is innovation aplenty - sometimes too much - in our enveloping gadgetry, in individual life styles, in the trivialities that concern us too much; but the essential structures of the institutions that should serve us - governments, churches, schools, businesses, hospitals, philanthopies - are seriously hobbied with rigid, obsolete, and retrogressive patterns. It seems as if those to whom ultimate responsibility has been entrusted, i.e., trustees and administrators, would prefer that the institutions they hold in trust fail completely, operating in the conventional way rather than risk an innovation that would have a chance to modify for the better the traditional structure of power and authority - and thus to build a more serving institution...

But there is a deeper answer, as I see it, that is central to the tradition of Friends; it is for the competent moral person to learn to know experimentally so that he can effectively discriminate when he follows, and so that when he leads he can dependably illuminate, with a superior wisdom, the path for others to follow so that they will trust, and be justified in trusting. The problem is how to assist the growth of more and stronger persons to do this through an educational process. One must, I think begin with a new, contemporary meaning of knowing experimentally...

FOLLOWING ARE READING MATERIALS THAT EXPAND ON THESE IDEAS:

- *Miami-Dade Community College Academic-Economic Planning Systems* (Offset Document) by Robert H. McCabe.
- *The Future in the Making* edited by Vermilye Dickman
- *The Education of the Whole Man* by L. P. Jacks.
- *Man and His Symbols* by Carl G. Jung.
- *Think on These Things* by J. Krishnamurti.
- *Mis-Education* by Paul Goodman.
- *Neighborhood Power: The New Localism* by David Morris and Karl Hess.
- *Advices to Servants* by Robert Greenleaf.
- *Cooperative Community Development [A Blue Print for our Future]* edited by Joe Falk, The Future Associates, P.O. Box 912, Shawnee Mission KS 66201 ($2.95).

JOYCE SCHWAB

I am a creation being
Seeing life as the freeing
agent for man,
agreeing we are all one.

Something tells me what
there is close to that
knowing part of me - yet,
still a portion of my mind.

Ramified - finally "damnified"
to rationale.
Logical - "methodological"
oh, so "practicological"?

The individual becomes so
clear now - it tends
to steer how I behave.
It is in the willing to respect the Dharma
that my Karma is.

And now sweet emotion
I surrender to you -
so that you may "never"
control my being; just the cool river
flowing to my
warm heart.

So, here I sit, in this
vehicle of flesh, aesthetic
flesh, some say;
This blob of me -
clonified, tonified -
a bona fide human ... being

STEPHANIE SLADON

You can't take away from me
They can't take away from me
That can't be taken away from me
I
can only
take away
from
me.

A PASSING THOUGHT

EDITH BAXTER

Thoughts channeled through words
provoke
stimulate
What is an **original** thought
Is there an **original** feeling?
In the process of thought
and feeling,
Do we echo others?
What depths do we dare explore?
How different is one person,
essentially from another in the
human experience?
There is - somehow - a sense of
comradery in the realization of
basic similarities!?
And yet, how important the
sense of uniqueness!

Soul Twin,
Where are you?

Beware,
for I come
bearing the blade
of my loneliness
before me.

- Lyn Herndon -

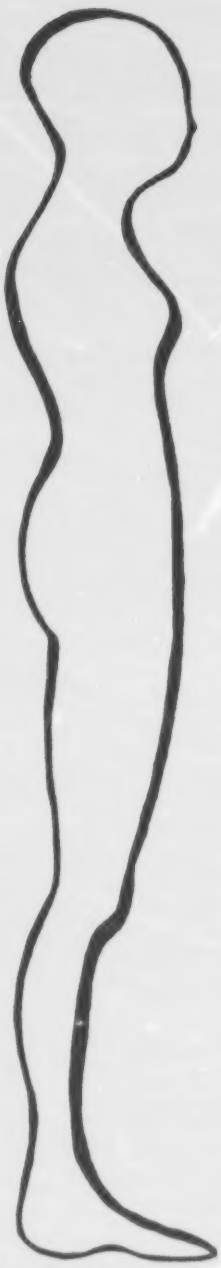
A LAB FOR WHAT?

By McGregor Smith

Life is a constant going,
A journey.
We get on,
Go a few stops
And get off..
All that energy flowing,
Going somewhere.
What is its source,
Where is it going?
Is it our business
To find out,
Or should
Just the going
Be enough?

Our lives are laboratories
For finding out..
Which is why
"Life" needs us
As much as
We need it.
It, too, wants to know.
We are its eyes,
We living creatures
Are its organs for knowing.
It does not want
To flow blindly,
Go on forever
Going on forever
Without some reason.
Is that our function,
To give reason to Life?

Like seeds, we are created
To explore life
And to die barren
Or fulfilled.
If we encounter
In our narrow womb
A spark
That sets us
Searching, growing within,
We may bring, finally,
In dying, a light
That goes on knowing,
A new spark embedded
In the womb
Giving meaning
To other travelors
Who will
For eons to come
Get on board
For a few stops
And get off again.



saying it

accept me - oh world
i must come to you
as a child
with new eyes

this grown body and growing mind
has searched for universal measurements
capable of enabling the energy of self
to see beyond looking and has found
the necessary flexibility to flow with
your seasons and climates

this grown body and growing mind
has experienced enough
to know your mirrored images
validating patterns and laws
so silently woven through each
generation
since the beginning of time

this grown body and growing mind
is reclaiming you with every sense
that has developed sufficiently
to detect visions of possibility and
potential through the mists of
cultural illusion

this grown body and growing mind
know that in order to see you
from this place so frighteningly far
from the secure and accepted camps of
labels and concrete structures
i must be reborn again eager
aware and with renewed vitality

accept me oh world
i must come to you
as a child
with new eyes

taru

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ABOUT HERB ROSS AND LIFE LAB

A laboratory of life....how perfectly right it is.

I was very excited when Nancy told me that she was going to downtown Miami with Jan Lovett to find out about a new educational program growing out of Miami-Dade Community College and run by a Mac Smith. The next few weeks were hectic, a whirlwind enrollment through a lady named Elyse Rapaport who was a Life Lab "programmer". They sat, sometimes for hours, giving and getting the necessary information. In those days, advisor's, then called programmers, worked on a one-to-onebasis. Naturally being an interested party, I tagged along to most of the community meetings that first term to experience the flavor of Life Lab. Definitely Butter Pecan with a generous serving of nuts! (Delicious) Finally I met Mac Smith and felt as though I had always known him. To this day, I have yet to meet such an accepting, clear and open person. He is one of the most creative listeners I ever met and was able to become excited about whatever ideas and concepts I discussed with him. He stimulated me into some of the most creative spaces I have *ever* experienced.

Looking back over the years now, I find how our relationship with Life Lab has added new dimensions to our 15 year marriage...and how it added space for both of us to move more freely about in. At first it became another "place" for Nancy to go to safely without needing my presence, and in so doing gave me the freedom to be active in other interests. In a sense it became a surrogate husband. As time went on, Nancy began to change and experience her own personhood. With determination and hard work, she began to see herself with a different set of lenses, changing attitudes and realizing that she could amplify and improve upon what liked, and discard what she did not. Then from the first subtle changes came an acceleration too deep and rapid for me to ignore. Fortunately, I loved the metamorphosis. Nancy Ross became Nancy Life Lab. I felt no sense of loss of the wife I had known, but a gain of a new friend and a learning resource. For Life Lab is not just two words strung together, but a viable entity. It has been a womb, mother, husband, and mirror to my wife as well as a center of learning for her energetic, inquiring mind. Life Lab did not turn out to be a place of concrete-block and stone where people go to get stuffed, stamped and credentialed, but a mother earth in academic robes and a nurturer for our fragile human lives.

I have enjoyed making myself available as a community resource person to Life Lab. I was made to feel a part of everyone and every activity going on. I see it's rich fertile environment to be an extremely healthy laboratory of human resource, guiding students and staff towards their individual potentials. At one time, I felt certain that students would "rip-off" a system that allowed freedoms such as the self-written contract, self-chosen grades and few, if any demands upon them to prove their efforts. And anyway, how could any institution survive on TRUST and OPENNESS? Yet, I have seen students who I know had every intention of ripping off the system get subtly and slowly sucked into the gentle vortex of self-motivation. For who in our society does not have questions about themselves, their abilities, their potentials? And so the policeman, the hippie, the grandmother, the housewife, the irrelevant teenager, the businessman, the Ph.D. black, white, yellow, and red melt together expressing a commonality of need that is magnetic in its creation of newly directed energies, new goals, new possibilities.

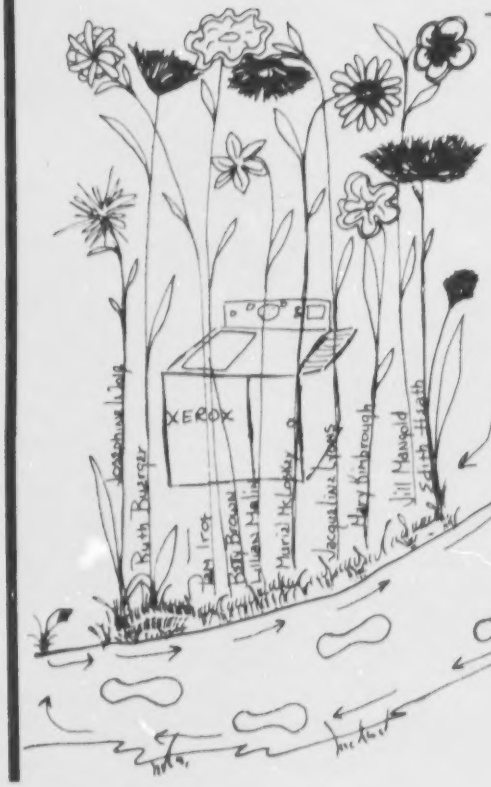
It is my wish that Life Lab never take itself too seriously, and so become hardened to changing needs and values of students, a place for facts and desks only. It is my wish that somehow, it retain its basic purpose and philosophy throughout it's institutionalization processes and pressures.

Herb

82 a view of others

Thank you Duplicating South
for your guidance, caring, encouragement, flexibility, trust, openness, and dedication !!

Thank you Central Administration for your patience, kindness, good will, cooperation and the use of your Xerox.



With Love and Sincere Thanks,

Nancy
and Staff of
"On Your Own - But Not Alone".

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ROSE MARIE INGRAM

Life Lab helped me realize my goals in life, and made me a stronger individual. Through the various sharing experiences during Life Lab I found that I was capable of more than what I realized, and by speaking out during the sessions I learned how to speak more openly while in a large group. I learned a lot about myself through my journal and I feel that writing it was a large learning experience in itself.

I am attending St. Andrews College in N.C. where I have one year left. I am majoring in Sociology. I feel that by being away from home I've been able to understand myself better and find where my weaknesses may lie. I plan on graduating from S.A. by next spring term. I would like to go into some type of counseling or social work.

FLORENCE SPIRO

Life Lab has become my home away from home. I have found answers to questions, questions to my answers, and people who listen and do not judge.

My peer group consists of a variety of ages and beliefs, yet we get along great. There seems to be a flow of energy between us that permeates, a warmth and caring.

I feel at ease even to the point of shooting off my mouth at times, but it is always taken in it's proper perspective and I'm not embarrased. I feel I have grown beyond my wildest imagination learning more than I bargained for. I've found peace of mind and I'm learning control of my body. I'm happy just being me.

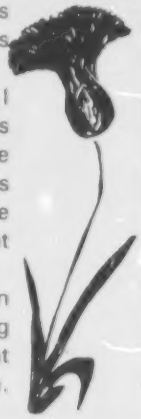
Among other things, I've found God again, and faith. I'm a better human being than I was before and I'm still learning.

LEAH CHASE

Anyone who has been closely involved in the Program knows that it carries a high serendipity factor. For example, my life as a mother calls for my working part-time. Anyone who has tried to find a good, professional part-time job knows how few are available. The Life Lab has been able to provide a variety of categories of jobs in an attempt to meet the needs of Advisors and students.

Another great thing that has happened for me as a result of working for the Lab is that, as I walked through the streets of downtown Miami to and from the Community College, I was reminded in many ways of my childhood, spent in downtown Miami, where we lived and where my father owned a barber shop. I am now writing a retrospective autobiography, which begins with "I was born." Also, I am reading autobiographies and studying memory, and plan to use this as the work for a Master's Degree which I hope to get through one of the independent study programs.

As I look at this plan of work and study, I realize that more than the physical fact of being in downtown Miami has inspired me to do it. I see that I am going the Life Lab way of working through to what is best for me as an individual. Indeed, I have been both Advisor and student at the Life Lab, and I am very grateful to the prince in scarlet knee bands for the experience.



GREGORY WILLIAMSON

Because of Life Lab, more options have been opened to me, educational, social, and personal.

I am a full-time student, a Florida International University Political Science major. My life style is very loose, but centered around community work. My current goal is a B.A. from FIU and graduate work. My long term goal is administration in Tallahassee.

JOHN AMATO

... Life Lab made me more of an extrovert and able to look beyond the classroom to supplement my education.

JERRY KEDRIERSKI

Life Lab has made a great impact on my life. I am a major of police, Miami Beach Police Department. I lived in a "police" shell vacuum and the rest of the world was passing me by. The interest and help given to me, especially by Al Wishneff and Ms. Valerie Fox, was fabulous! I rejoined the human race. Co-students and faculty were simply great! I hated leaving M-DCC and have revisited there several times and will continue to do so.

I am in hot pursuit of a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice, Florida International University. My goal is to complete the BA and move on to a Masters Degree in Criminology and Corrections to aid my fellow man.

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GARY EISENBERG

Life Lab opened my being. It was the LINK into the path which I have taken - TGFMS. (Thank God for Mac Smith).

I could write all day about the difference Life Lab has made.

Listen to any of my tapes and the happy tone my voice holds and you'll understand.

I finished F.I.U. External Degree in 1974 - and I will receive my M.A., from Lone Mountain College, November 1975.

My occupation? Life Lab Advisor to the Local High Schools. My life style? Busy as hell!

My current goal is to go along with change. My long term goal is to direct my own school program.

PATRICK CONNOLLY

I've been taking courses at the Dade County Jail for almost eight months now and have noticed quite a change, for the better.

When I first started we didn't have Peer Group meetings, which to me are very beneficial because some people can express themselves better verbally than they can in writing. Plus, another important factor is feedback. You get to see other people's viewpoints, which can sometimes mean both sides of the fence.

Now we get together twice a week with Steve Bergman and see what other people are doing and to share ideas. Steve brings in all the materials necessary to go about researching particular subjects and we have someone who cares. He checks our folders just about every week and steers us when we are getting on the wrong path.

I've compared Life Lab to structured classes and really wonder why it doesn't take over the major institutions of learning. The one point that stands out the most is a person gets to be an individual with thoughts of his own and doesn't have a teacher's personal beliefs to contend with.

A change to bigger and better things!

MARJORIE ENT

Life Lab has given me the satisfaction of a goal half won.

I am a teacher with many outside interests. My long term goal is a B.A. in Education.

ILANA SCHENKER

Through Life Lab I have become more aware of myself and my interaction with other people. I learned how to study and use resources of all kinds by myself.

I am working as a textile designer. I would like to finish my schooling at F.I.U. for a B.A. in Psychology.

LUCILLE GOODMAN

Life Lab made a big, big difference. Bless it for getting me into the best trip of all - learning.

I'm going to FIU for regular classes and am also enrolled in their External Degree Program.

My occupation is interior design. My life style? Hectic! But pleased.

STEVE BERGMAN

Nancy has cornered me in my office and asked me to jot down some information about myself. Well vocationally I'm doing Life Lab peer groups, advising in the Dade County Jail and also teaching kindergarten in an inner city public school. The Jail Groups have had a profound affect on me as well as on the jail. Many strange things have begun to unfold....like the student who put a mural on the wall in the jail as a part of this term's contract....and like the Muscle Relaxation Workshop Ann Pace presented for us being labeled "practice for an orgy" by the jail staff....and my first experience of being locked up in a cell. Sometimes I don't know if I should laugh or cry. As I look back now a couple more incidents flash into my mind....like holding a peer group meeting at a Miami Beach Hotel for the elderly....and the time I was accused of hating white people by an Indian student....I could really go on and on, but instead, I'll just anticipate tomorrow. It's more fun.

EDITH KAHN

Life Lab is much like a melting pot, contributing toward making us a unique but well-blended concoction of people.

Learning helps its students grow. Because of its innovativeness, Life Lab itself is growing. For this reason it must, of necessity, be flexible so that it can continually make changes for the betterment of its system.

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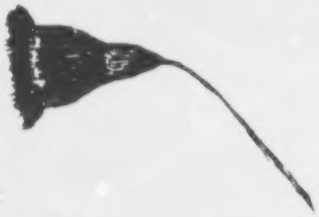
PAULA HULICK

I feel that Life Lab was one of the most personal worthwhile learning experiences I have had. It has made me rebellious to "only one way to learn" concepts...and aware of the many advantages of the "stimulate to learn" type concept. To be honest with you, I had, at times, my doubts while in Life Lab - the Journal - the "paste and clip." Believe me, it was the most worthwhile thing I ever did. I would like to be in this type of program again - both as student and "worker". All people should have the chance to learn and apply what they learn from their life experiences. I miss the tapes tremendously.

Now I'm attending F.I.U., majoring in Home Econ. Ed. (wishing it were philosophy instead). I'm a fulltime mother, student, wife, friend, consumer, organizer, volunteer, try(ing?) to replenish mind and soul. I'm taking one step at a time, trying to really enjoy, learn, evaluate, relate and improve life for myself and others.

I want to take a breather, a sort of an 'Ann Morrow Lindbergh' - "Gifts From the Sea" breather - I need to sort myself out - find out how I really feel about my education - and life in general. I want to get an education - not a certificate.

My idea for today is - we desperately need Life Lab in this area for "Upper Division" Education. We need a system that continues to facilitate flexibility, copes with change, motivates the mind, encourages empathy, and provides development of pathways.



ELINOR GUTTMAN

The growth and awareness the Life Lab experience has brought me has been instrumental in changing my whole life. It changed my self-concept, gave me assurance and positive feelings about myself. It also made me aware of unrecognized creativity I possess. Now I can understand other people and relate better to them, thereby contributing to better inter-relationships with others. All this has brought me happiness and a better outlook toward life.

Next week I'm going to Chile for a long vacation (to visit my family). When I return, I will decide on future goals, and make plans to continue my education.

LYN HERNDON

Life Lab is a fantastic resource center, and a good place to meet and interact with other people. It is hard for me to place a **limited** value on the good Life Lab has done for me. As in many worthwhile things, I found what I put in, determines what I get out of it. Let me say this: When I went through orientation for my Freshman year of college at a Northern university, the college representative looked out at us and said, "People.We're going to flunk 1/4 of you out." That's a direct quote. I was in a machine - I had no importance as an individual. - The first semester's courses were designed to eliminate poeple, not to educate them. The idea was to disqualify people, not help them reach their highest potential. We were pitted against each other. That realization had a profound effect on me. I did poorly that year and found myself in the 25% flunk-out group. I wasn't particularly unhappy about it. Five years later I found out about Life Lab. Despite my aversion for red tape rigamarole', I began school again, while working full time. I took a full load of courses. From the beginning I was encouraged to become the best ME. I was educated to the fact that what I thought, how I felt, was important. The main value of my education was, I learned, it's worth to me. I was starving for positive reinforcement - drawn to Life Lab like a magnet. I'm lucky. I got a job here. I can be here every day. That means a lot.

I'm a receptionist. I take classes in Tai Chi Chuan, auto mechanics, am involved in USCPFA, and self-directed non-credit study. I'm busy by choice - can change it if I want - and live modestly.

SYLVIA MILLER

In 1973, with a high school degree and many courses in real estate and psychology, I happened to hear about Life Lab.

I think that what being in Life Lab did for me, was to give me the feeling that "I have a right to be here." Life Lab was the place where people listened to what I said and answered.

I am now attending F.I.U. with Political Science as my major and anthropology as my 2nd major. A's are my usual grades and I feel that it might be the result of the amount of reading and writing I did in Life Lab. I learned how to research and find resources, which has been very useful in Political Science.

I think that most of all, what I learned in Life Lab was to be myself and even if I did things differently from the way other people did them, it was O.K., and I was O.K.

Life Lab opened life for me.

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BERNICE FRANKEL

This is my fourth quarter in Life Lab, and I'm in the home stretch. I have been giving a lot of thoughts towards my goals.

My goal is to enter the Public Administration program at F.I.U., but when I started Life Lab in '74, I did not have a specific job or profession mind.

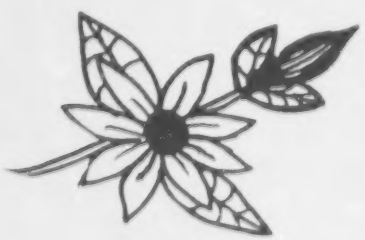
I started Life Lab because I wanted to have a better understanding of myself as a human being, and I felt that with all my life experiences I really had more to give to others if I could conquer my fear of failure. At the beginning, the idea of "going back to school" at my age rather scared me. But I must say, Life Lab gave me confidence and I'm truly enjoying an academic atmosphere, and at the same time mastering skills of knowledge.

In theory, the life of a housewife who has raised a family of three grown children, and has been a volunteer worker in her community, carries, as far as I am concerned, just as much weight as that of a corporate tycoon. What counts are the skills, knowledge, and attitudes gained through experience.

In Life Lab, I picked courses that had meaning for me. I found the four terms a very heavy program (eighteen subjects in all) but enjoyed every minute of it: tapes - 72 of them really digested, 36 in-depth book reviews along with keeping journal and logs and attending special seminars and CCEW sessions.

With a lot of discussion with my programmers, and research on my own, I found out that I have a flair for language - both written and spoken. I have imagination and ideas. I found out through being just more aware, I have drive, initiative, and ability to organize. Thanks to four quarters of Life Lab, I have acquired a good academic background in creative writing, public speaking, psychology, social science, and of course my own life experiences. I really feel with this type of program I will achieve my goals, and as for a "time line" for achieving my B.A., another year and a half, and then hopefully on to a masters program.

I am indeed grateful to Life Lab and CCEW for giving me the opportunities for helping me find myself in a program that I have a great opportunity to succeed in.



EMMA E. FERN

I truly feel that all of my Life Lab experiences have been most meaningful and significant; however, since this is my last semester, I am setting forth what I feel to be my most rewarding learning experiences in Life Lab.

During my first semester I contracted for an "A" project in Biology and set forth to create a Terrarium along with a paper on how I accomplished this. In doing so I gathered much material and did a great deal of research in preparation. I surprised myself with the results of my effort and was thrilled when my Advisor Beatrice Lippman recommended that all of it be reprinted for the use of future Life Lab Students. This meant a great deal to me, as I had not attempted anything of this nature previously and had not written a paper since my high school days some thirty years ago.

I also feel that the many Seminars which I attended were stimulating and extremely beneficial. Some of my favorites were "The Occult" given by Beatrice Lippman, "Self-Hypnosis" given by Pierce Tudor, and the "Mahikari No Waza" presented by Japanese healers.

I am going to miss being a part of Life Lab, but I am thankful that I elected to be a part of it's unique system of learning which helped me to attain goals I could never have considered had I not accepted the opportunities Life Lab offered.

TILLIE GLICKMAN

How does one go about saying "Thank you" to Life Lab for being the kind of educational establishment it represents?

Its basic aim and method is to have the student develop his or her own potential.

Life Lab offers many fine opportunities to accomplish this.

As for myself, I've been in Life Lab for five semesters, and already I can truly say that I've become more aware, observant, and capable of making decisions more readily, by juding the validity, merit, and value of a problem or situation. I am much more knowledgeable in many avenues of understanding, especially in the courses I studied.

This is due to a "Study Contract" required in Life Lab and a must to be honored. I deem all this a satisfaction of personal worth.

I wish to thank my advisor, Denice Gollwitzer, for her patient understanding, and for being available whenever I felt a need of her.

To Life Lab, I applaud the entire faculty with a "Bravo" for their unique ideas in directing the students toward a new function, to structure his or her goals toward whatever achievement he or she hopes to attain.

FRANCIS KATHLEEN PATTERSON

One of the most misleading phrases in modern society is "compulsory education": it is impossible to have compulsory education - the most you can achieve is compulsory attendance.

Life Lab is attaining an education through personal initiative. Like riding a bike and roller skating, education achieved through this method is retained throughout our lives.

SYDELLE GOLUB

I feel my experience at Life Lab was one of the most significant in my life. The warm, supportive, searching people helped me to realize I was not alone in my quest to find a better way of life. This gave me the courage and support I needed to assess where I had been, where I wanted to go, and evaluate my goals as an individual, honestly.

The warmth and the concern for people I found among the staff at Life Lab was a rare and precious quality. I hope it is never lost. I Love You All!

SONIA SPIEGEL

LIFE LAB has opened my world and extended it many ways. I have met new and wonderful people in new and wonderful situations. My interests have expanded and for that I am eternally grateful. I am more open to learning and discovering and I think these are very important aims of "education." Life Lab I love you!

I'm trying to find a Life Lab II - after Life Lab I - in order to continue learning in such an enjoyable way!

My occupation? Cleaner, cooker, wife, laundress, shopper, "student," pianist, volunteer music lady at Home for Aged, etc. My life style? Multifaceted - home - school - orchestra three times a week - volunteer on Friday - Good wife to a semi-invalided husband (a very bright and wonderful men). Seven days a week often get used up satisfactorily.

My current goal is to continue growing mentally and otherwise - and to continue college. My long term goal is to make a life for myself that will satisfy me and those I love and care for.

ILEEN SEIDLER

What difference has the Life Lab experience made in my life? It has MADE my life.

(Currently) I'm enrolled in Shaw University, I'm a Life Lab advisor, married with two children. My goals are to complete my B.A. and eventually earn a Ph.D. in Psychology.

SCOTT

Life Lab has enhanced my learning capabilities through self-directed education - one of the best things that has happened to me. I am now reading much more. I also attend many workshops available in Dade County. Before Life Lab I wasn't too interested in furthering my education but now my outlook is totally different.

I am enrolled in Governors State University to get my B.A. I feel that my education will enhance my job potential. I am now a father and husband - and I am very much into physical fitness.

My short term goal is to become an administrator in the field of drug rehabilitation. My long term goal is ensure security for my family and myself.

TONY A. NERROD

The process of learning in Life Lab is the best thing since pen and pencil.

I personally feel like learning from every day actions has more to offer than any textbook or classroom I could ever experience.

Don't get me wrong ... one can learn a lot from books, but how much does one use from his books or classrooms for everyday, down-to-earth, needs. When it comes down to living, knowing the resource is more important than memorizing the book and passing the test.

ARLENE HUYSMAN

Life Lab was the beginning of a new life - professionally and personally. I could never have accomplished all this or even have entertained the thought if not for humanistic education, and I'm dedicated the progress of this type of education.

I'm a research fellow for the doctoral program at Humanistic Psychology Institute, San Francisco. I'm a psychologist - behavioral therapist and acting director of the Day Treatment Center at Jackson Memorial Institute.

POLDI ORLANDO

Life Lab opened new avenues, a complete change towards my reservations about following a goal towards higher education.

I am in a Masters Program at Lone Mountain College. I am a dance therapist, and instructor.

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VALIERIE J. BENNETT

The most important thing I learned in Life Lab is that out of chaos comes order. I no longer panic when events in my life don't make sense. I also learned to think things through. My life potential has expanded 100% because I now realize that, for example, one book that I may read can lead me into so many unknown areas, if I choose to go. I am now aware of the resources that are available to me to learn about **anything**, and that I can do it myself! Thanks, Life Lab, for these things and so much more that I'm still becoming aware of.

Currently I'm at F.I.U. working on B.S. in Art Ed. at night. I'm a teacher, Alexander Montessori School, 1-3 grades, language arts and cultural subjects. I don't have time to have a life style! My short term goals are to get my degree and to succeed this year as a teacher. My long term goal is possibly working with emotionally disturbed children. I'm primarily interested in motivating children. Also, would like to do some writing for publication on the emotional development of adults.

BILL LITTLE

Presently I'm in the Dade County Jail and am somewhat limited in my resources compared to those of the outside community. Although, with Steve Bergman's concern and dedication, we have been able to attain different types of resources, such as cassette tapes, pamphlets, films, and a variety of books. These are very helpful to our learning process, especially for those of us who cannot read that well.

I've been in Life Lab for a period of three months now, and have realized that there is "no limit" to what one can learn, and "no limit" to the objectives one can pursue. Life Lab's structure is based on what you want to learn from any particular course, and you concentrate on the interests which are most important to you. You don't have to follow the book all of the time, and you can bypass what is of no interest to you. I find I am getting the utmost out of the time I spend reading.

Our peer groups are somewhat smaller than that of a structured class, which allows for superior discussions, "rap-sessions", along with positive feedback which is necessary for any benefical understanding.

Any experience, productive or not, can be a learning experience. This program has helped me tremendously and has taken the "drag" out of what they call school.

KAREN KAY

After two people told me that Life Lab was a place where I'd really fit in, I decided I'd better go and see for myself. That was over a year ago, and I must admit that both of them were right. I'm extremely impressed with the warmth and caring of the staff and delighted with the students. They come from such diverse backgrounds and are my peers in our learning experiences. It is my feeling that the integrity of the program truly involves the sharing of knowledge and skills. It's beautiful to see people learning and growing together. I too have grown a great deal in the past year working as a Life Lab advisor on a part-time basis and being employed full-time for the Dade County School System in charge of the Peer Counseling Program at a local High School. Many of the skills I've acquired in working with groups have been most useful in both positions, and it's really fun to compare the responses of adults in Life Lab with those of High School students when we do the same activities. Being a Life Lab advisor has given me the chance to meet people I never would have known and enabled me to gain a great deal of confidence in myself as I meet with each new group. I've learned of another side of life by also working with Steve Bergman in the jail program. All in all, I've found out that there is a human bond between us all.

SYLVIA MEHLER

Life Lab made all the difference in the world. I feel I know that my life has real meaning and that I have something to contribute. It gives me a feeling of happiness to think of all my dear friends in Life Lab. They had time to talk to me, to be concerned with what I was concerned with, and I learned immeasurably about emotions, feelings, knowledge, and about me. I would like to think that in some way I can repay the world for this very great gift I received.

Now I'm going to F.I.U., working as Assistant Secretary (part time) on Project Elderly. I'm living every minute I'm alive! I want to get my degree from F.I.U. and live long enough to do something with my education.

KATHLEEN SEXTON

I came with an MSW, four years of professional social work experience, and a recent history of being a maverick in my field. I came with the self-imposed label of feminist. My tools were a briefcase, Ms and Viva magazines, and a master's diploma that hung on the wall of my offices for all to see and for me to see. Credibility for me laid behind these facades/roles. I was only as real as I allowed to be within the realms of my showpieces.

Equipped with hours upon hours of leisure time thoughfully furnished to me by the State of Florida's Unemployment Commission, looking in a half-hearted fashion for ever new and exciting spaces to make use of my education, I stumbled upon an old friendship. My friends spoke of what seemed to be a land of unlimited possibilities -- a place called Life Lab where, I was told, I could find the space to make my own space.

This has begun to happen for me.

There no longer seems to be much room for pretenses, games, 'no-nesses'. Nonsense, deliciousness and affirmations are becoming more a part of my life. Balance is being restored to my life so that the peaks reach down to valleys while the valleys soar to peaks.

Life still stalks me. But this time I do not run. I somehow watch scared shitless without fear.

I say, Yes to the circus! Yea to me!

I give thanks for each new day of loving.

I greet the hope of maybe.

FLORENCE CAMPBELL

From the very beginning of my introduction to Life Lab - I have been aware of a change in my thinking, also of the talents I possess and am now endeavoring to use. The mind is such a wonderful and necessary part of the body. But most of us ignore it. I am thankful I am now using my mind to such an extent I never imagined possible.

I have the same job at Jackson Memorial Hospital - data technician, and my life is in most areas the same - my thoughts - no. I want to continue my learning at Barry. If each day I progress a small bit, then I may attain a BA Degree.

ELSI KATZ

Life Lab has increased my confidence in myself, and alerted me further awareness of the joy of learning, which as a result, is directing my energy to higher goals.

I am applying to Skidmore College for my B.A. studies. My occuation is art therapy.

My life style? Working on organic vegetable garden - discarding non-essentials. My short term goal is working to earn money at something I enjoy. My long term goal is furthering my education, hopefully for a better position.

LEE EMMER

Life Lab has enabled my brain and my body to start moving again in the direction of developing my own selfhood. I have acquired counseling skills, developed self-confidence, the knowledge that I **can** be productive and successful; the distinct desire to become productive, successful and self-dependent.

Life Lab was the beginning of a new life. Thank you, Life Lab.

Currently I'm a homemaker and student enrolled in Skidmore, UWW. My life style is slightly more liberated, and - definitely more conscious.

This summer I am going to attend the "Academy for the Science of Creative Intelligence." I want to continue to grow and explore my own possibilities.

MARY LUFT

Life Lab gave me a great deal of exposure to new ways of living, an opportunity to find out about and the use of mechanical aids. The time I spent I feel was a gathering, collecting time of people, resources, ideas. Having gone through this experience I feel Life Lab aided me to synthesize my path into a clear focus and direction.

Most of my energy (now) is wrapped up in Fusion (Dance Company) - classes, rehearsing, choreographing, growing in my marriage and with my children. My short term goal is to perform with Fusion concerts and in the school system. My long term goal is a degree in dance therapy or dance education, and to continue performing.

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BARRY REED

I feel my family and I are in a security trap. We have everything others think is necessary to be comfortable, but they're not the things we really need. I'm concerned about the values my children are learning. I'm concerned that I'm wasting my time and my life as well as my family's.

Routinization is my stimulation for change. About halfway to work, I find myself asking why I do the same things repeatedly to the point of unconscious response. I am more cynical of about my life. There doesn't seem to be any advancement, enlightenment or learning in my present situation.

I have learned that my possessions really possess me. It is very hard for me to change my ingrained value of security, money and owning. Security is probably the single most difficult barrier to where I feel I want to be. Patty and I began talking about our situation, only to realize we shared many of the same fears and dreams. We made an open-ended decision to make a change in our lives. Now that decision is coming to the point of "put up or shut up." Soon we will be giving up our cars, our house, our possessions, our jobs and hopefully for a more relaxed way of living.

Everyone has offered us new ideas and new places to see. We have decided to buy a Motorhome camper, travel for a year and experience all we can. After travel and some already planned ideas, we feel we will have a better idea of where we want to be and what we want to do. I know we will regret leaving friends behind. I would want them all to experience it with us.

This is not a sightseeing trip, but more of an insight-seeing trip. The emphasis is on experiencing rather than just existing.

After almost two years of planning, checking, and writing, Patty, the kids and I are in the action stages of making the final move. Already the weight is lifting.

PAM JOHNSON

What difference has the Life Lab experience made in my life? Tremendous. Gave me new experiences, more confidence in myself, and work. Only my mother did more!

I am in the Skidmore College External Degree Program. My occupation is Program Advisor at Life Lab. My life style? Gay divorcee alternating with staid philosopher.

My short term goal is to be centered. My long term goal is not to need goals.

PAT REED

Why are we quitting? **Now** it's not very difficult to say - but the process of sorting out the **Whys** was extremely difficult.

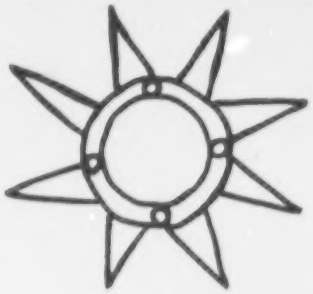
A combination of things caused us to decide to sell our home, quite our jobs, and "hit the road." Primarily our dissatisfaction seemed to stem from the fact that we were in a rut.

Go to a job to earn more money to buy more things (that you didn't **really** want or need). Day in, day out, a routine life without much meaning, feeling or **impact** on the world.

What a waste of the short span of time given us on this earth.

We had to know much, much more and be able to experience life instead of reading about it or watching it on TV.

It may all be a **big mistake** - I doubt it . but there is that possibility. With that knowledge at hand, I still approach our adventure enthusiastically because I'd rather face the possibility of a mistake than stagnate in an everyday life for fear of trying.



UNKNOWN

The Life Lab thing-
The gift of more motivation.
A chance to experience, dream creative thoughts.
A chance to keep up with changing college life, meet new people, see new things, absorb new things, reflect the stimualtion.
See yourself as others see you, think of happenings and your reaction to them - your feelings - evaluating yourself, yourself, against yourself.
The opportunity to stop and take that look into yourself to feel good with yourself.
Develop more love for the spiritual, emotional and physical self.
See how they all work together for one's own good and goal of life.
A chance to open up the intellectual mind.

NORMA NEWMAN EVALUATION

As this semester closes, I find once again that the study plan at the beginning is quite different from the work accomplished. I cannot help but think that in many ways what I did was much better than what I thought I might have done.

If there were only a way to write in one simple statement all I feel that I have gained in these three and a half months, but that is a task too complex. I once said that I felt too fragmented and that my Life Lab experience had removed a glass dome from over my head and that as a result I was more conscious of the world. This continues to be true.

My world has expanded not only in the areas of the subjects that I contracted, the new relationships in the peer group, the projects we planned and completed, but also because I have learned much about myself and my personal relationships.

As usual once again I have found that subjects cannot be separated. The more I look for differences, the more I see the parallels. If you start with yourself, get in touch with yourself, you will be in touch with the world and you will understand the world because you and the world can not be separated. It's really marvelously true.

Our group participation has been more rewarding for me. Gour projects, both on campus and off, have been significant to me because I can see how much impact a small well run group can have. Field trips have afforded me the opportunity to do things that I might never have been able to do otherwise.

I have spent a great deal of time this past year trying to explain Life Lab to my friends and family. Why it should be so difficult for me to communicate I am not sure. I think the major problem is that I keep changing, and as I do my personal Life Lab myth changes too. More recently I find I do not feel obligated to explain either myself or Life Lab!

FRED W. CRENSHAW

After attending my first Life Lab Human Sexuality Seminar, I feel that I am competent in the field of amateur gynecology.

BILL RAKER

Some people may feel that to travel 20 miles to go to school is a long distance and feel that they should find something a lot closer to home. This may be good enough for some people, but not for me.

My name is Bill Raker. I live in Boca Raton. This is a distance of over 60 miles for some of my classes at Dade Jr. College (Downtown).

I feel my education is well worth the distance I travel. Most of the travel is pleasant and I don't really mind the drive. But the main reason I don't mind the drive is knowing that Life Lab will be there when I arrive. A fuller or more interesting type of class cannot be found anywhere in this area, and the people (advisors, fellow students) I go to school with are the most interesting people I have ever met.

To conclude I would like only to say that if the distance were 100 miles or even 500 miles the education in Life Lab alone, is worth it.

TOMMY HARPER

I live in Broward County (Fort Lauderdale), a round trip of approximately 35 miles to South Miami. My interest in Life Lab makes it worthwhile to travel this far. Life Lab has been most helpful to me and has made me a better person in today's society.

My following term will be taught at the downtown campus on Tuesday night. Belle Gendler will work with me as my advisor. I'm looking forward to the summer term and I'm anxiously waiting to return to Nancy Ross's peer group in the fall term.

On several occasions it was necessary to be tardy on my Monday night peer group. The reason for this was not only the distance but also the work I'm in. My new job as a service manager requires more than a 40 hour week. I'm responsible not only for the men who work under me but also the many customers who demand immediate service and attention.

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UNSIGNED LINKS

My experience in Life Lab has created an extremely strong desire within me to explore myself and I feel that I have achieved a clearer perspective.

I will be graduating from F.I.U. in a couple of days with a B.A. The Air Force is my occupation and I live a somewhat conventional yet self-directed life.

My short term goal is to become an officer in the Air Force. My long term goal is to continue my education to my maximum capabilities.

PROGRESS

I honestly enrolled in Life Lab for one reason...
V.A. Benefits.
Money.
I'm now in my second semester and
Find myself becoming more and more involved
And liking it.
Certainly I'm still interested
In the money
But now when I think of Life Lab
I think of what I'm actually learning and
How I'm looking forward to more and more
Learning
Broadening my knowledge in so many ways.
I not only look forward to peer group meetings
But to actually
Reading, feeling, knowing, integrating.
For me - this is definitely -
Progress.

When I enrolled in college I felt that on a scale of importance, my family world come first, my job would come second, and then, if time allowed, I would continue on with my schooling. Knowing this, I attempted to locate a program that would meet my requirements.

Having heard about Life Lab, I checked into it further. I felt that the program would allow me to fulfill my obligations to both my family and my job and allow me to get a more practical education. I think the world practical is very important, for spending time obtaining knowledge, I expect and need the knowledge gained to work for me in my chosen field, of which 10 years of my life has been invested.

Life Lab has helped me advance in my field of work, and in my life as a whole.

To men, women and children of all races and ages, no matter what your hang-ups may be. You, whether you realize it or not, are starving for education; not necessarily to get super-smart but to keep up with rapidly changing times.

It is time to stand up and be counted, to make our country an even better place for our grandchildren to live. Get out of your rut, crack your shell, open your eyes. Who gives a shit what your father's expectations of you were? He didn't know what the future was to bring and neither do you, so change yourself now.

Life Lab, at the Downtown Campus, is a great place to start. Come on down and look around, visit some seminars and peer groups. You will find a great bunch of people.

This is only my second semester in Life Lab. I can only go to school one year under the G.I. Bill. Since I started Life Lab, I have become very interested in learning. After this first year, I know that I will continue in Life Lab at my own expense. I will have to go two additional years to graduate, as I am only going part-time. My biggest problem is to find my way to my peer group instructors home. I can't believe it. I get lost every week.

The thing that strikes me the most about Life Lab is the openness of the people involved. Everyone lets their hair down and becomes their own selves.

If Life Lab doesn't accomplish anything else but this, students are bound to learn because it relaxes mental attitudes, allows for growth, and provides an exciting new potential for all.

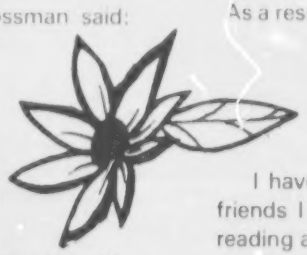
The Life Lab experience has been an interesting experiment in self awareness for me. I call it an experiment because it is completely opposite to any standard of education I have previously experienced.

To learn what is important to me, to read what relates to my desires to learn is a unique and positive experience. The most interesting thing about Life Lab is being able to achieve ones own goals and being completely satisfied that I have done what I have WANTED to do.

Student says:

Some of us have higher expectations than others. It is difficult to decide just how much work is to be done. Just what does it take to satisy me? Undoubtedly, I am the hardest teacher I've ever had.

On returning to Life Lab, Maxene Grossman said: Life Lab still has the ability to excite me.



TOM STONE

Life Lab gave me better insight into what this world is all about. I am a police detective. My life style is FREE. My current goal is more education.

ELYSE RAPAPORT

Life Lab has opened my eyes to seeing education as a lifetime process rather than training to fill a role. This has enabled me to create new opportunities and open many new doors for others as well as my self.

I am starting my Ph.D. Program shortly with Union Graduate School. My occupation now is consultant to Temple Israel's Chai Community and teacher at University of Miami. (My life style? Living and enjoying.)

I would like to achieve my Ph.D., and develop a new kind of spiritual educator by expanding the religious leader role to include "people" helping "people," identify spiritual needs.

JACKIE QESDAL

Starting out in Life Lab was pretty frustrating for me. I couldn't plug into all of the parts right away and the way it was presented to me seemed really crazy. My advisor told us only what we immediately needed to know, and we had to think the rest out for ourselves.

This is my second term in Life Lab. I feel more confident now, and have obtained a better insight into my future goals. It is a very rewarding and healthy experience for me.

This type of non-structured atmosphere of learning is more acceptable to me as a human being, and the types of learning patterns I have developed help me grow mentally and emotionally as well.

STEPHANIE SLADON

When I have myself - I don't feel that
Frantic pulling to be someone else with others.
Thinking about doing it rather than taking the action
Keeps me from myself.
The more I put off until another time
The farther self appears to be real.
As a result - abandonment of true self occurs.

EVELYN SALTMAN

I have a warm regard and connection with the friends I have made in Life Lab. I'm interested in reading and learning about anything and everything, as Life Lab had quite a part in igniting my interests in so many directions.

I am now attending F.I.U., am a busy housewife and student. My goals are to finish school and teach.

CLAIRE MASTERS

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

Personal feelings about Life Lab:

I found Life Lab a place not only to achieve an education, but a place where people give and receive feelings about each other, both positive and negative.

The negative feeling is possible without hurt feelings and raising of defenses because of the mutual trust and a developing skill in education.

Through Life Lab, a norm of "feedback" is developed, and because "feedback" is an avenue to learning that most of us seek constantly without realizing it, and because "feedback" is usually withheld rather than freely given in our day-to-day interactions, the sensitivity training is a highly valuable one. One leaves his peer group with a sense of individual and group accomplishment and a keener awareness of self and others. The sense of accomplishment is in proportion to how **much** one has been able to unfreeze and unwrap his feelings.

Life Lab has been fun. It has a magic brought there by the participants, but it has also gone so deep. I'm going to be ME just like I've always been, but now I am much, much more aware.

Since this is my graduation semester, I want to give special thanks to my advisor, Bea Lippman, for her constant help and guidance through all the education-achieving semesters. And now I say to myself - about Life Lab - where do I go from here?

a strong, distinguished, handsome woman stands at the center of my portrait... she seeks **Balance** in her life. she dances often now the dance of madness. she is in the midst of the study of **Death** as Letting Go. somehow she cannot let go or hold on tight enough. ... she is **learning** that she was born to be on this path, that she is not separate from but truly in relationship with **ALL** that is around her; that there is nothing to fear. she leaves her tracks upon the sand; she **NEEDS** to root herself in her Mother, the earth ... her own Mother, an incarnation of that Earth Woman. she finds that letting go is an act of **re-birth** ... recognition is given to the people she has served... respect is given to the holiness she holds within herself.

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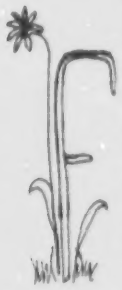

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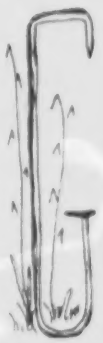

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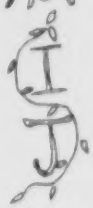

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CUT ALONG THIS LINE

LIFE LAB RESEARCH STUDIES

During the past year many different types of studies have been conducted under the Life Lab Grant. The studies cover a wide range of student attributes and fall mainly into three areas, comparative studies, longitudinal studies and one-shot, pychometric studies.

The comparative studies were performed in conjunction with the Office of Research and Testing at Downtown Campus. of Miami-Dade Community College. These studies include a demographic survey, a study of student satisfaction and needs, a relevance study and an educational attitude study.

The longitudinal studies were conducted using Life Lab students only. These include a continuing demographic survey and the Tennessee Self Concept Scale survey. First year reports on these areas are included for comparison.

The single administration psychometric studies were conducted using Life Lab students present during a specific school semester. Both the Nowicki-Strickland Adult Locus of Control and the Learning Style Inventory were administered during registration weeks of two different terms, Fall and Spring/Summer, respectively. Since the Life Lab enrollment is most variable during Spring/Summer Term, the results on the

Learning Style Inventory should be the least representative of any study conducted.

These studies conclude the funtioning of the research component of the Life Lab Grant. A strong component of measurement and feedback has been developed and implemented. Through this Grant, it has been shown that Life Lab can employ the standard psychometric devices without undue strain. The Program now has the option to continue these studies.

SELF-CONCEPT STUDY, PHASE II

Introduction

The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) is the "work horse" of the Life Lab Program's psychometric battery. Easy to administer, score, and understand, the TSCS has been administered to Life Lab students over four college terms. The first year report contained a comparative study employing the TSCS. For background and to avoid repetition, that section of the first year report is included in Appendix SCS-1.

This phase of the Self-Concept Study proposes to investigate the relationship between length of time in Life Lab and subscores on the TSCS. Since the earlier study has shown that basic differences between Life Lab and non-Life Lab students can be seen in TSCS scores, the possible developmental aspects of the program remain to be investigated.

Administration

The TSCS was administered to all Life Lab Program students during regular registration for the Fall Term of 1975. Subjects used mark-sense computer cards which were scored on the Testing Department's TSCS program. A total of 617 subjects were tested.

Results

Results on the TSCS were combined with number of terms in Life Lab. The number of terms in Life Lab were determined by an investigation of individual transcripts. This method was employed since it is possible for a student to register for three, four or five courses and receive the same amount of program and program-advisor contact. Four subscores used in the first year study, Distribution Score, Total Positive Self-concept, Self

Criticism Score and Total Variability were investigated. These four scores and the number of terms were analyzed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation program of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Results are presented in Table SCS-1.

TABLE SCS-1

Correlation between TSCS Subscores and Terms in Life Lab

SUBSCORE	CORRELATION WITH TERMS	SIGNIFICANCE
Distribution	.0819	.042
Total Positive	.0085	Not Signif.
Self Criticism	.0044	Not Signif.
Total Variability	.0016	Not Signif.

Results indicate only moderate significance between Distribution Score and number of terms ($p < .05$) and no significance between number of terms and the remaining scores. Distribution Score reflects the distribution of responses (from 1 through 5) on the TSCS. A subject is given 2 points for every "1" or "5" response, one point for every "2" or "4" response and no points for every "3" response. This score helps reveal subjects whose responses are mostly 3's (very low Distribution Score). These subjects do not reveal a great amount of information on self-concept. Subjects with a "black or white" view of the TSCS questions tend to get a high Distribution Score. Increase of the Distribution Score over time is expected to indicate a gradual increase in confidence in self-concept.

Discussion

The lack of correlation between three TSCS subscores and length of

time in Life Lab support the stability of self-concept. At the same time, these results also support the hypothesis that Life Lab does not effect self-concept. This can be understood in reference to the first year study (see Appendix SCS-1). Life Lab students can be assumed to self-select into the Program by the nature of recruitment. This would cause initial group differences in self-concept but has no relation to effect over time.

The single significant relationship, Distribution Score over terms, can be explained from several sources. First, the Life Lab Program places great emphasis on self-knowledge. Journal keeping, small group interaction and exercises based on sensitivity training are only three of the many techniques used to increase self awareness. This could generate the effect found in this study.

The second possible source of this effect is the Life Lab Program curriculum. Focusing on the liberal arts and specifically the social sciences, the Program provides seminars in psychology, values clarification, social problems and others. The academic portion of the Life Lab Program could also effect self-awareness and thus the Distribution Score.

Conclusion

There is a significant relationship between length of time in the Life Lab Program and an increase in self-awareness as measured by the Distribution Score on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale. No other subscores on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale investigated evidenced any significant relationship.

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

The Life Lab Program provides a unique educational environment which concludes in a two-year Associate of Arts degree. The student population in this Program is considered to be as unique as the Program itself. A study of the demographic characteristics of this population was performed to seek these differences. (A comparison between Life Lab and other programs is included in the comparative study conducted in co-operation with the Office of Research and Testing).

PROCEDURE

A standard demographic form was distributed to all students registered for the Winter Term of the school year 1975-76. These forms were returned to program-advisors and then to the Life Lab Grant staff. Data was keypunched and tabulated.

RESULTS

Rate of Return. A total of 524 responses were obtained. This is a rate of return of 69.13% based on a total enrollment of 758 students.

SEX

Approximately 70% (69.66%) of the respondents are male while only 30% (29.77%) are female. The 2 1/3 to 1 ratio

between males and females is consistent with previous surveys. This ratio is also found in the Black and Anglo ethnic groups which comprise 92% of the Life Lab student population.

ETHNIC BACKGROUND

Life Labs' student body is 76.53% Anglo, 15.46% Black and 5.15% Latin. This is consistent with previous surveys and illustrates the overwhelming presence of Anglos, especially Anglo males (54.2%).

MARITAL STATUS

Nearly three-fourths (73.47%) of Life Lab students reported themselves as married. Only 16.79% were single at the time of the survey and 8.59% were divorced.

AGE

The average age of respondents is 33.34 years. The median age is 31.96 years, indicating that the distribution of ages is slightly biased toward the younger years. Over eighty percent (80.08%) of the respondents are between the ages of 25 and 45 years.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Over eighty-five percent of the respondents (85.11%) indicate having full-time employment. Less than ten percent (9.73%) are unemployed.

OCCUPATION

Fully one-fifth of the respondents (20.61%) are employed in some form of protective services, e.g., police, fire, security. Another eighth of the respondents (12.79%) are homemakers. The remaining respondents are distributed throughout the range of occupations. A large number of subjects (19.66%) did not respond to this item. This, though, would contain the unemployed (9.73%) and retired (1.34%).

DISCUSSION

Once again the typical Life Lab student is found to be the middle-aged, Anglo male, married and employed full time. This, although consistent with previous surveys, is unusual for the Community College. The Life Lab Program appears to be serving that portion of the Dade County population which pre-dates the college itself. These 30 to 40 year-olds were unable to attend Miami-Dade upon graduation from high school since Miami-Dade did not exist in its present form. The Life Lab Program provides a way for this group to "catch up" to the education they could have had, had they been born a decade later.

Without unnecessary repetition, it should be pointed out that the Life Lab Program is still predominately Anglo. The verbal skills necessary for success in the Program and its unorthodox style still serve to deter other groups, especially Latins.

As will be seen in the comparative study, the Life Lab Program is unique at the Downtown Campus in providing service

to the 25-45 year old, full time employed population. This uniqueness may exist over the entire Community College although further research would be required to support this assertion.

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY RESULTS-WINTER TERM, 1976

Marital Status:

Single	88(16.79%)	Widowed	2(0.38%)
Married	385(73.47%)	No Response	4(0.76%)
Divorced	45(8.59%)		

Employment Status:

Full Time	446(85.11%)
Part Time	18(3.44%)
Retired	7(1.34%)
Unemployed	51(9.73%)
No Response	2(0.38%)

Occupation:

Homemaker	37(12.79%)	Clerical	47(8.97%)
Protective Services	108(20.61%)	Technical	10(1.91%)
Armed Forces	1(0.19%)	Operations/Lab	46(8.78%)
Management/Admin	30(5.73%)	Health Related	10(1.91%)
Crafts/Foreman	62(11.83%)	Misc	12(2.29%)
Service	47(8.97%)	No Response	103(19.66%)
Sales	11(2.01%)		

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY RESULTS-WINTER TERM, 1976

Total 524

Ethnic/Sex:

	Male	Female	Subtotal
Anglo	284(54.20%)	117(22.33%)	401(76.53%)
Black	57(10.88%)	24(4.58%)	81(15.46%)
Latin	16(3.05%)	11(2.10%)	27(5.15%)
Oriental	----	1(0.19%)	1(0.19%)
Indian	1(0.19%)	----	1(0.19%)
Other	7(1.34%)	3(0.57%)	10(1.91%)
NR	3(0.57%)		3(0.57%)
Subtotal	365(69.66%)	156(29.77%)	

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY RESULTS-WINTER TERM, 1976

Age Breakdown:

Average Age	33.34 years
Median Age	31.96 years
17-24 years	62(12.35%)
25-45 years	402(80.08%)
45-65 years	38(7.57%)

Learning Style Study

Introduction

The relationship between individual learning styles and the educational process has been investigated in many educational situations. Various cognitive styles have been studied in relationship to student achievement and satisfaction. The Life Lab Program is a unique educational experience and, as such, should require from and foster in its students special learning traits. This study proposes to investigate the relationship between the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) developed by Kolb and Plovnik and the students in the Life Lab Program.

Instrumentation

The Learning Style Inventory is based upon an experiential model of education similar to the Life Lab process. Learning is conceived as a four stage cycle. Immediate concrete experience is the basis for observation and reflection. These observations are assimilated into a "theory" from which new implications for action can be deduced. These implications or hypotheses then serve as guides in acting to create new experiences and the cycle repeats. The learner, to be effective, needs for different kinds of abilities, Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation abilities.

The LSI is a simple self-descriptive inventory that is designed to measure an individual's strengths and weakness according to Kolb and Plovnik's learning model. It measures an individual's relative emphasis on the four learning abilities, Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualization (AC), and Active Experimentation (AE).

The Learning Style Inventory (see Appendix LSS-1) requires the subject to rank nine sets of four words. Scores on each of the dimensions are calculated by summing the ranks given to specific key descriptive words.

Administration and Subjects

The LSI was administered as one step in the registration process held in the Fall 1975 term. All Life Lab students registering at that time were asked to take the LSI. There were no refusals. A total of 757 students completed the LSI. Most students found it relatively easy to answer although some experienced some difficulty with the vocabulary. For this group, a "home-made" glossary was provided.

All students were informed that their scores would be made available to them through their program advisor. This was done to increase student interest in the LSI and to provide feedback. Feedback of LSI results was deemed desirable since the theory behind the study of learning styles holds that knowledge of style can assist the student and facilitator in planning educational experiences.

Responses to the LSI were key-punched onto data cards and scored by computer program. Results were then punched on a second set of cards. These final cards were matched with the individual student's length of time in the Life Lab Program, e.g., no terms (entering student), one term, two terms, three terms, four terms, five terms, or no term known. These were finally submitted to computer analysis with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Group averages for each of the four subscores was computed and a correlation coefficient between each subscore and length of time in Life Lab was calculated.

Results

The results obtained tend to support the educational process developed by Life Lab. First to be considered will be the correlational data. This is done so that, if any relationship between score and length of participation in Life Lab does appear significant, consideration of group averages will be done by length of time in Life Lab.

A total of 698 subjects taking the LSI indicated the length of time they had spent in the Life Lab Program. This was from a total sample of 757 or 92.2%. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was calculated between each subscore and the term the student was completing at the time of administration. The results can be seen in figure LSS-1. As can be seen, none of these scores are significant. Therefore it is reasonable to

Figure LSS-1

Correlation between LSI subscores and Term

LSI SUBSCORE	CORRELATION
Concrete Experience	0.0165
Reflective Observation	-0.0700
Abstract Conceptualization	0.0456
Active Experimentation	0.0131

hypothesize that the Life Lab Program has no cumulative effect on the learning style of any of its students. Also, this test permits us to analyze student averages as a group.

Life Lab student mean scores on the four subscores of the LSI are found in Figure LSS-2. As no norming scores were available at this writing, they are contrasted with the mean subscores of MIT Business School under-

graduate and graduate students as reported by Kolb and Plovnick. As no standard deviations were reported for the MIT scores, any tests of significance on the means would not be recommended.

Figure LSS-2

SUBSCORE	LIFE LAB	MIT
Concrete Experience	15.46	13.25
Reflective Observation	13.89	12.50
Abstract Conceptualization	15.95	18.00
Active Experimentation	15.86	16.00

The Life Lab subjects score higher, on the average on the two subscores, Concrete Experience and Reflective Observation. They score lower on the subscores of Abstract Conceptualization and Active Experimentation. While there is no way to test the significance of these differences, they are supported by the Program's practices.

Discussion

Since data on the LSI is not available for the non-Life Lab student population of Miami-Dade Community College, it is not possible to determine if these results are an artifact of the overall population or specific to the Life Lab Program. What is possible to discuss is the absence of significant correlation between the subscores and length of time in Life Lab and the gross relationship between Life Lab subscores and those reported for the MIT students.

The absence of any relationship between LSI subscores and time in Life Lab may be explained in one of two ways. The first explanation is that the Life Lab Program has no effect on the traits measured by the LSI and that students maintain the learning styles they enter with. Since the Life Lab student population has tended to stabilize over the two years term of this grant, this is a possibility.

The second expianation is that students with particular learning styles "self-select" themselves into the Life Lab Program and the Program reinforces an existant learning style without fostering others. This explanation could be supported by comparative data from other Miami-Dade students. Since this data is unavailable, the MIT data will be considered.

Comparisons between the Life Lab data and the MIT indicate that Life Lab students emphasize the Concrete Experience and Reflective Observations Components more than the MIT subjects. Life Lab students also emphasize the Abstract Conceptualization and Active Experimentation components less than the MIT subjects. This corresponds to the Life Lab Program practices.

The Life Lab Program concentrates on the use of individually valid learning experiences and the "processing" of these experiences. As such, they are reflected in the student scores. The Life Lab student scores high on Concrete Experience, the ability to involve oneself fully, openly and without bias in new experiences, and high on Reflective Observation, the ability to reflect on and observe these experiences from many perspectives. The ability to create concepts that integrate these observations into sound theories (Abstract Conceptualization) and the ability to use these theories to make decisions and solve problems (Active Experimentation) are the lower subscores.

The MIT undergraduate and graduate student would appear to be involved in the use of these last two components. Since the scores indicate this, it would be reasonable to believe that the learning styles emphasized by each group are consistent with their educational experience.

Conclusions

The learning styles evidenced by Life Lab Program students on the Learning Style Inventory (Kolb and Plovnik) are consistent with the Program's educational experiences and expectations. The students are stronger in concrete experience and reflective observation. Since no measurable change in learning style occurs during time at Life Lab, this learning style is supported as being in concert with Program goals.

NOWICKI-STRICKLAND STUDY

Introduction

Recent research by John Roueche and Oscar Mink into the education of the non-traditional students has brought to the forefront the concept of internal-external locus of control. Internal-external locus of control refers to "the extent to which persons perceive contingency relationships between their actions and their outcomes." Those who believe that they have some control over their destinies are called "internals," i.e. they believe that some control resides within themselves. "Externals," on the other hand, believe that their outcomes are directed by agents or factors extrinsic to themselves, e.g. fate, luck, chance, or powerful others.

With the advent of open admissions policies at many community colleges, a large number of non-traditional students have been accepted to attend class. These non-traditional students are from low-income, possibly minority backgrounds, who have experienced little satisfaction and success in their previous educational attempts. Roueche and Mink have found that one common factor joining many of these "non-traditional" students is an external locus of control type of world view. These students have not experienced the significant amounts of educational success necessary to generate positive behaviors in the educational sphere. They see themselves as having little control over their educational outcomes and are, therefore, less apt to exert significant control to succeed.

The Life Lab Program at Miami-Dade Community College is an alternative educational program which stresses self-direction on the part of the student. For this reason it is suspected that students with a high degree of external locus of control would not enroll, leave the Program or, most desirable, become

more internal in their locus of control.

This study was done to establish the Life Lab students' internal-external locus of control as a group and to provide what is considered to be valuable feedback to the student and program-advisor. This second goal is highly important toward keeping the student in the Program and dealing with locus of control under favorable conditions.

Instrumentation

The Nowicki-Strickland Scale for Adults is a forty item, force-choice instrument designed to measure internal-external locus of control and is presented in Appendix NS-1 suitable for fifth grade reading level and are answered yes or no. Scores range from 0 to 40 with 0 representing extreme internal locus of control and 40 representing extreme external locus of control.

The Nowicki-Strickland has evidenced good reliability and validity.

Administration

The Nowicki-Strickland was administered to 424 Life Lab students during registration for the Spring/Summer term 1976. Subjects were given the Nowicki-Strickland and asked to fillout mark-sense cards. The cards were returned, punched and scored using the Miami-Dade Community College's Academic Test Scoring Program on IBM 370 computer.

Results

Results of this administration of the Nowicki-Strickland are presented in Figure NS-1. Included with the Life Lab data are means and standard

deviations from another southeastern community college (unnamed) and community (also unnamed) as reported in the literature by Catherine Christner.

Statistical comparison reveals that the two means of college students (both Life Lab's and Christner's) are not significantly different. Both college means differ significantly from the community sample, with Life Lab being slightly more significant ($p < .01$) than Christner ($p < .05$).

FIGURE NS-1

Nowicki-Strickland Scores: Life Lab, College, Community

	Mean	Standard Diviation
Life Lab (424)	8.821	4.429
College (154)	9.06	3.89
Community (33)	10.96	5.61

Discussion

Results of the first administration of the Nowicki-Strickland indicate that Life Lab students do not differ significantly from one other community college sample. They do differ significantly from the community sample. This would indicate that the Life Lab Program should expect that its students represent a standard cross-section of "internal" and "external" individuals. Although no specific demographic data was collected with Nowicki-Strickland scores, it would be expected that the more external students would be found among the non-traditional students.

Conclusion

The results of the Nowicki-Strickland testing indicates that the students

in the Life Lab Program do not differ significantly from other community college populations contrary to expectations. The presence of this range of locus of control subjects suggests that the techniques developed by Roueche and Mink for working with this type of student be taught to Life Lab Program staff. Follow-up should also be developed which will contact students leaving the Program and assist them to return.

Introduction

The research performed in the course of this project will cover many areas. Depending upon the results, certain types of modification may be indicated. If this is the case, it would be helpful to be aware of some of the attitudes of the Miami-Dade Community College, Downtown Campus' student body concerning education.

One of the basic attitudes of students is the attitude toward educational practices. This attitude would influence the form of implementation of any changes in the educational experience. "The Education Scale," developed by Kerlinger and Kaya is designed to measure one dimension of attitude toward educational practice, progressivism-traditionalism.

Instrumentation

"The Education Scale" (see Appendix EA-1) uses twenty likert-type items to measure the dimension of progressivism-traditionalism. Ten items address progressive educational practices while ten others address traditional educational practices.

The subject responds to each item by entering a number between -3 and +3. The code can be found described in the appendix. Results of administration by Kerlinger and Kaya indicate the instrument has reasonably satisfactory estimates of reliability and validity. It is recommended that results be interpreted as representing a location on a continium between two poles of attitude, progressivism and traditionalism.

Subjects

Subjects for this study were randomly selected from sequence numbers of classes offered by House Four and House Five and the Outreach Program.

A random selection of Life Lab peer classes was also included in the sample.

While a total of 571 subjects were administered "The Education Scale", only 502 responses were complete. A total of 69 subjects (12.08%) did not complete the Scale. This normally occurred when the subject did not turn over the page. The most frequent errors of this sort took place in House 4/House 5 classes (13.48%). Outreach followed with an error rate of 9.09%, while the Life Lab Program evidenced the least, 4.08%.

This can be traced to the mode of administration. The Life Lab Program and Outreach classes are normally smaller is size and permit more control by the administrator. House 4/House 5 classes are larger. In this situation, the administrator's ability to check returned forms is usually limited.

Results

Results on "The Education Scale" were compared between delivery systems (House 4/House 5, Life Lab and Outreach) and between ethnic groups (Anglo, Black Oriental and Latin) through a one-way analysis of variance. Comparison of ethnic groups within delivery systems and sex within delivery systems was performed using a two-way analysis of variance.

The analysis of variance statistical technique involves multiple comparisons between group means (averages). If any one of these comparisons is statistically significant, the analysis is statistically significant. If no significance is found, it can be assumed that there is no significant differences between the groups under consideration.

The one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) is used to compare group scores along one dimension or trait, e.g., sex, program, etc. The two-way analysis of variance (Two-Way ANOVA) is used to compare group scores

across two dimensions, e.g., sex by program, ethnic background by program.

As presented in Table EA-1, the comparison of "The Education Scale" scores between delivery systems (House 4/House 5, Life Lab, Outreach) using a One-Way ANOVA indicates that a statistically significant relationship exists. Further investigation of the mean (average) scores for each group reveals that Life Lab respondents have a significantly more progressive attitude toward education than either House 4/House 5 or Outreach Program respondents. As presented in Table EA-2, House 4/House 5 and Outreach Program respondents have a "middle of the road" placement on the traditional-progressive dimension as measured by "The Education Scale". Life Lab respondents score significantly in the progressive direction.

When scores are compared on the basis of ethnic group, no significant differences occur between delivery systems. As can be seen in Table EA-3, the F-ratio, the measure of the degree of significance, is low, indicating little difference between ethnic groups.

The Two-Way ANOVA of scores partitioned by ethnic group and delivery system is presented in Table EA-4. There is no significant difference on either the ethnic group dimension or the delivery system dimension. Also, the interaction between the two dimensions, whether different ethnic groups score differently within delivery systems, is not statistically significant.

It is not until the Two-Way ANOVA of scores by sex and delivery systems, presented in Table EA-5 that a statistically significant result occurs again. As can be seen in Table EA-5, the two main effects, sex and delivery system, do not provide significant differences. The interaction of the two main effects (Sex X Delivery System) is highly significant. This indicates that a differential effect has been measured. Mean scores presented in Table EA-6, reveal that males are slightly more progressive than females

but not significantly so. Also revealed is the differences between the delivery systems. When combined, though, the mean scores indicate that females in Life Lab, although not as progressive as Life Lab males, are more progressive than would be indicated by the differences between sex groups in the other two delivery systems. This is an example of an interaction effect in which the delivery system variable evidences a differential effect on the subgroups.

Discussion

This study tends to support what has been common knowledge, that the Life Lab Program, as a less traditional educational experience, tends to either attract or foster progressive attitudes in its students. Also indicated is data supporting the premise that students in the more conventional delivery systems share more conventional attitudes.

The presence of a large group of "progressive" females within the Life Lab Program is indicated by the interaction effect. This group, although within a progressive program, are more progressive than expectations would lead one to believe.

With respect to furture modifications of educational programs, the data in this study suggests that being consistent with present practices would be recommended. Changes made by any delivery system should follow the guidelines presently being pursued by that delivery system. This study reveals no dissonance between delivery system goals and the educational attitudes of the students in that delivery system.

Conclusion

As measured by "The Education Scale", the attitudes of Miami-Dade Community College, Downtown Campus students are consistent with the programs

in which they are enrolled. Students in the House 4/House 5 and Outreach Programs measured mid-way between the extremes of progressive-traditional. Life Lab Program subjects, as would be expected, measured significantly more progressive than students within other programs. Life Lab Program females, in comparison, were the most progressive.

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TABLE EA-1

One-Way ANOVA: Scores by Delivery System

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Main Effects	571.961	2	285.980	3.050*
Residual	46790.305	499	93.768	
Total	47362.266	501		

*p < .05

TABLE EA-2

Education Scale Scores by Delivery System

Delivery System	Mean Score
House 4/House 5	0.33
Life Lab Program	3.94
Outreach Program	0.04

TABLE EA-3

One-Way ANOVA: Scores by Ethnic Group

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Main Effects	726.212	4	181.553	1.915
Residual	46444.629	490	94.785	
Total	47170.844	494		

TABLE EA-4

Two-Way ANOVA: Scores by Ethnic Group by Delivery System

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Ethnic group	575.124	4	143.781	1.525
Delivery system	417.650	2	208.825	2.215
Interaction	588.959	6	98.160	1.041
Residual	45438.020	482	94.270	
Total	47170.844	494		

TABLE EA-5

Two-Way ANOVA: Scores by Sex by Delivery System

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Sex	1.049	1	1.049	0.012
Delivery system	560.303	2	280.151	3.117
Interaction	2412.609	2	1206.304	13.422*
Residual	47302.375	493	89.877	
Total	48276.336	498		

*p < .01

TABLE EA-6

Education Scale Mean Scores: Sex by Delivery System

	House 4/House 5	Life Lab	Outreach
Male	0.51	4.15	0.26
Female	0.10	3.74	-0.15